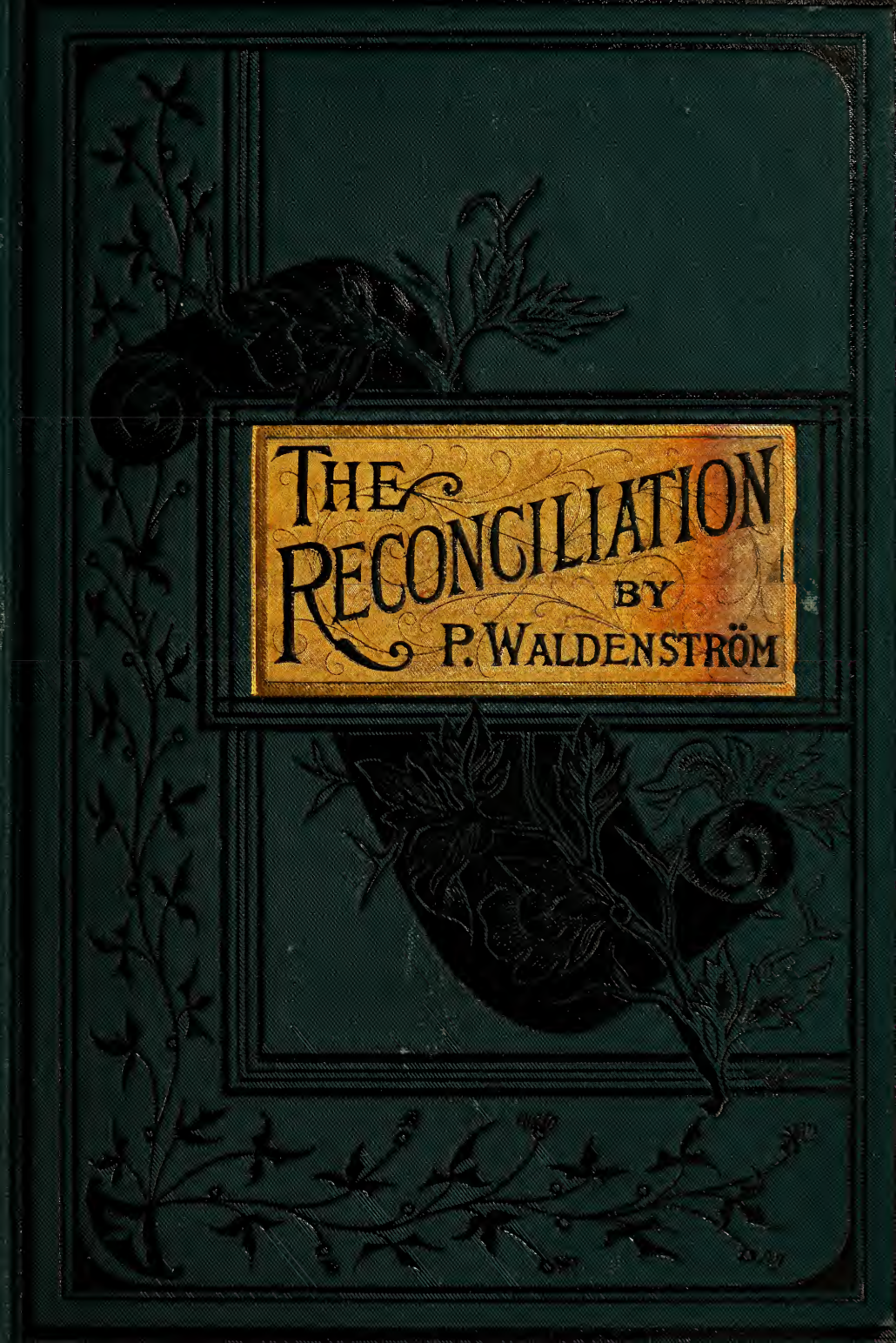

THE RECONCILIATION
BY
P. WALDENSTRÖM

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THE RECONCILIATION.

WHO WAS TO BE RECONCILED?

GOD OR MAN? OR GOD AND MAN?

SOME CHAPTERS ON THE BIBLICAL VIEW OF

THE ATONEMENT.

BY

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TRANSLATED FROM THE SWEDISH, WITH SOME NOTES ADDED, AND AN INTRODUCTION,

BY

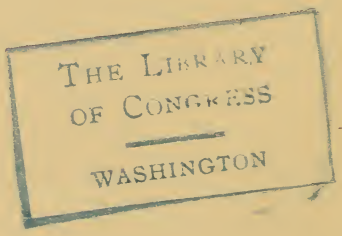
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INTRODUCTION.

Here is offered to the English reader a devotional, non-controversial, little book of the greatest importance both as regards Christian Biblical knowledge and as regards the influence of that knowledge on the mind and whole life of a believer in God and his Word. Facts and experience in the cases of thousands of readers have shown that the practical results of the Author's setting forth of God and his work in Christ as is done in this book have been these among others, to wit: — a clearer and more satisfactory apprehension of the whole subject in all its bearings, — a greater love of God, the Father, and of Christ, his beloved Son, the Redeemer, — more faith and interest in the Holy Scriptures, together with a wonderful opening of eyes and hearts to their truths, accompanied by a greater conformity to their teachings as well in regard to the Church as in regard to individuals, — a more sanctified and spiritual life under the more clearly recognized influence and guidance of the Holy Ghost, — a greater Christian activity in genuine revival work and general missionary effort for the cause and glory of Christ only. Thus these teachings have stood and stand the test, "By their fruits ye shall know them."

Of the Author and his works some few simple notices are given in the Introduction to his treatise entitled "THE BLOOD OF JESUS," published in English simultaneously with this, and in the "ANNOUNCEMENTS" at the end of the same, to which the reader is referred.

Very likely many questions will rise in the minds of thoughtful readers, especially of such as have preconceived opinions concerning the subjects touched upon by the Author in this book, which opinions they may be loath to give up. The Author asks for his presentations only a

candid reading, and a judging of them simply according to the question which he has so solemnly propounded these many years and made to ring in the minds and hearts of the mass of Swedish Christians: ***"What is written in God's Word?"*** Let the Scriptures be searched as to whether these things be so! (Acts xvii. 11). It is not expected that this little book will answer all questions that may be raised as to the subjects of which it treats; many important points are cleared up and treated more fully in other works of the Author, works that are referred to in the notes here and there, and that will be published, God willing, from time to time.

For obvious reasons some quite copious foot-notes have been added by the undersigned; those not marked J. G. P. are by the Author. Also in the text everything within brackets has been added by the undersigned for the sake of (at least supposed) greater clearness in the bringing out of the thought in the original. The Bible quotations are from the Authorized Version unless otherwise distinctly stated.

As the Author is thoroughly loyal to the Bible he finds in it nothing to deny and nothing to explain away; with him there is no denying of the full, absolute divinity of Christ, no belittling of sin or the punishment due to it, no questioning of the justice or wrath of God, — rather the reverse of all this: he lays greater stress on all these facts than do most of his opponents. He brings no pet theory to the Bible to be proved or defended by it; he simply asks: "Blessed Book, what dost thou teach?" And then he records the answer. Hence, he mentions and combats no theories by name — whether the moral, the vicarious, the governmental, or any other. If, dear reader, you ***must*** have a name for the Author's view, call it the Scriptural, or the Biblical, one, — the Bible View of the Atonement.

Chicago, May, 1889. J. G. PRINCELL.

CHAPTER I.

Necessity and Cause of the Reconciliation.

1. ***"Therein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins"*** (1 John iv. 10). The salvation which God has in Christ prepared for the world is in the Bible called sometimes redemption, sometimes reconciliation, or propitiation. All those expressions, to save, to redeem, to reconcile, denote the same thing, seen from different sides.*

* As there are at least three words used in English to express the subject-matter of this treatise — to wit, *atonement*, *reconciliation*, and *propitiation* — and only one word is used in Swedish for all those three, that word being *försoning*, from the German *versöhnen*, (another word, *förlika*, to make alike, or to make to like, is often used as synonymous with *försona*, but less frequently in religious literature), and also as there is in the English Authorized Version of the New Testament considerable irregularity in the translation of the Greek words in question, I will here, for the convenience of the reader and for the purpose of clearly stating at the outset the subject-matter of this treatise, cite all the words and passages of the N. T. referring to the subject which is variously called atonement, propitiation, reconciliation, and redemption. These four are Bible terms, but to them have been added in man's theology several terms to express, as supposed, either the same thing more fully or some other thing thought to be inherent in the Biblical terms. Such superadded theological terms are: expiation (and the verb, expiate), appease, render satisfaction to divine justice, vicarious sacrifice, substitution, and perhaps a few others of like import. Though these terms may be appropriate, and are, no doubt, properly used in various human relations and in reference to matters on merely human spheres, they are never used in the Bible to ex-

In other meditations we have already seen what the term "redemption" implies. This term is figurative. It sets forth salvation under the figure of a purchase, according to which a slave or prisoner is purchased or bought out of the bondage in which he is found. The term reconciliation, however, sets forth the real essence of salvation. For salvation ***consists*** just in the reconciliation of man to God. Let us, therefore, now examine the Bible passages which set forth salvation as a reconciliation. May God graciously lead us in his light and truth. This subject is of extra-

press any relation between God and man, never in reference to any thing on the strictly divine sphere — most of them do not occur in the Bible at all. The generic term, comprising all the Bible terms on the subject, is *salvation* (Greek *soteria*, from *soter*, deliverer, saviour, that from *sozo*, deliver, save, make or preserve safe, afford safety, make whole or sound, restore, from *so-os*, safe, sound). Of that term it is not necessary to say anything more special here. Of the four N. T. terms, atonement, propitiation, reconciliation, and redemption, the last one and its verb, redeem, are considered by our Author in a separate treatise, which soon will be published in English. Of the three other terms, atonement is used in the Eng. Auth. Ver. of the N. T. only once: to wit, in Rom. v. 11, where it is a translation of the Greek word which is everywhere else rendered reconciliation, and is thus rendered in the Revised Version also in Rom. v. 11. It is for this reason that I have translated the Swedish title of this treatise (*"Försoningens betydelse"*), not thus: The Significance of the Atonement; but thus: THE RECONCILIATION, ITS SIGNIFICANCE, etc. In the N. T. are, therefore, really only two Greek words with their derivatives, just as in a true English translation there need be but two words and their derivatives (in the now accepted Swedish Version there is but one word with its derivatives) to express the whole idea of the subject here considered: to wit, man's salvation, or the means and acts of bringing men into a true and happy relation to God. These words are: *1. Katallasso*, from *kata*, down, through, throughout, and *allasso*, I change, I effect a change, hence *katallasso*, I change thoroughly or throughout, I effect a thorough change, as between parties at variance. This word occurs *six* times, rendered, *reconcile*, viz. in Rom. v. 10 (twice), in 1 Cor. vii. 11, in 2 Cor. v. 18,

ordinary importance; and especially in consequence of the unhappy questioning which has been going on among us these late years concerning this subject, it is necessary as well to examine what the word of God teaches, as also, in the light of that word, in all quietness to test what men have taught concerning this subject aside from the word of God, and which side-teaching has so often perplexed simple souls. By a sincere love of the truth, we can find it; and by remembering that we can never lose anything by giving up wrong opinions for the sake of the word of

19 and 20. Its derivatives are: (1) *Katallage,* a change throughout, or a thorough change; it is used *four* times, viz. in Rom. v. 11 (there incorrectly translated *atonement;* it should be *reconciliation*), in Rom. xi. 15, *reconciling*, and in 2 Cor. v. 18 and 19, *reconciliation*. (2) *Apokatallasso,* from *apo,* from, out of and *katallasso* (as above), hence I change thoroughly from, or I effect a thorough change from or out of, as from or out of one state or condition into another; it occurs *three* times, rendered *reconcile,* viz. in Eph. ii. 16, and in Col. i. 20 and 21. (3) *Diallassomai*, from *dia,* through, throughout, and the passive form of *allasso* (as above), hence of the same force as *katallasso* in the passive, that is, be changed throughout or thoroughly; it occurs but *once,* viz. in Matt. v. 24, rendered *be reconciled. 2. Hilasmos* is the second of the two principal N. T. words under consideration; its root-word is the adjective *hilaos* (not used in the N. T.), gracious, favorable, kind, cheerful, hence the noun *hilasmos* would mean graciousness etc., but is restricted to the meaning of what makes gracious, kind, cheerful, hence the act or thing which affords grace, cheer, kindness, favor, and is translated *propitiation* in the *two* only passages in which it occurs, 1 John ii. 2 and iv. 10. Its related words used in the N. T. are: (1) *Hileoos,* same as *hilaos* above, gracious, merciful, kind; occurs *twice,* viz. in Matt. xvi. 22 (rendered *be it far;* better, *have mercy,* or *spare*) and in Heb. viii. 12, rendered *merciful.* (2) *Hilaskomai,* the verb, meaning in the *two* N. T. passages in which it occurs plainly this and nothing more: I show grace, mercy or kindness with respect to, that is, I pardon; Luke xviii. 13, rendered *be merciful,* and Heb. ii. 17, the A. V. rendering, *to make reconciliation,* the R. V. rendering, *to make propitiation,* plainly meaning, to show mercy with respect to, that is, to pardon. (3) *Hilasterion,* neuter adjective, showing

God, we can with serenity of mind search after the truth. But by knowing and understanding the truth, we shall better learn to know our God and his Son, Jesus Christ, our Saviour, and thereby become more and more truly free. "If ye continue in my word," says Jesus, "ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John viii. 31, 32).

2. Not only in the Christian religion, but also in heathenism has the necessity of reconciliation made itself felt. There is a witness within man, a witness whose voice has never by any means been completely silenced, a witness that testifies that it is impossible for man to be saved or to obtain peace without reconciliation. Even pagans feel that their happiness depends upon their being in a right relation to God; but they also feel that now they are not in a right relation to God, and this fills them with fear before their gods. Therefore, also their hearts cry

mercy, one who or that which exhibits grace or mercy; occurs *twice:* Rom. iii. 25, rendered *a propitiation*, that is, as one who shows mercy, and Heb. ix. 5, rendered *mercy-seat*, the Septuagint translation of the O. T. term *kapporeth* (the lid or covering of the ark in the tabernacle of Israel) being *hilasterion*, Ex. xxv. 17, 21 and elsewhere.

Taking it all in consideration, there is a real identity of import and application of the three principal Biblical terms, atonement, propitiation, and reconciliation, and that is what our Author holds forth in this treatise, showing that God is never in the Scriptures said to be the object of what these words imply, but that man is the object, and that God through his representatives, and not man, — Christ being most supremely God's representative, as he frequently declared (e. g. John v. 19, 30, 36, 43) —, is the subject, the author, or doer of the acts expressed in these words, these acts being always represented as directed towards and bearing upon man. All the Bible terms on this subject clearly denote, not God's *becoming* merciful, conciliated, reconciled, appeased, propitiated, or the like, but God's *showing* himself, by sending Christ and having him to do his work, as already merciful and gracious, so that he needed not to be conciliated, reconciled, appeased, or propitiated. *J. G. P.*

for reconciliation. Their many sacrifices, ceremonies, tormentings of self, pilgrimages, etc. are just so many cries after reconciliation unto God. This feeling of theirs is no error, but a deep truth. All thoughts of salvation without reconciliation only bear witness of a stupified conscience or an effort to silence it. The Holy Scriptures testify with the greatest possible decisiveness of the necessity of reconciliation. The whole object of Christ's coming and work in the world was reconciliation. ***Every*** religion — pagan, Jewish, and Christian — is penetrated with the expressed or implied need of reconciliation. Not to stifle or to explain away this need, but to ***confirm, strengthen, and satisfy*** it was Christ sent by the Father into the world.

3. Often even such men as, when there is no danger, impudently and without fear deny God, are seen to tremble at the nearness of death, because, in spite of all their denials, they feel themselves standing before God. Their conscience testifies that they are in a wrong relation to him, and this fills their soul with fear and despair. There was once a man who delivered a lecture before a large concourse of people, in which lecture he tried to prove, amid the applause of the audience, that there is no God and no eternity, that no reconciliation is necessary, that no judgment or reckoning would ever come or ought to be expected, etc. When he had concluded his lecture, there stepped forward an old man, who related how once from the banks of a river he had seen a boat in the act of being more and more drawn by the current towards a waterfall. In the boat sat a man, who with all his might was using one oar to stop the boat or bring it to the shore; the other oar was broken. When the man saw that all his work was in vain and that in a few moments he would have to meet an unavoidable death, then in despair he let go his oar, fell down on his knees in the boat and cried to God for mercy. He was saved in a very wonderful

manner. "And" — thus the old gentleman concluded — "that man was just this person, who now here before you has tried to show that there is no God, no judgment, no eternity, and no need of reconciliation." Pale and trembling, the infidel withdrew while the old gentleman was speaking; and the audience dispersed with feelings of sadness.

4. Thus, as to the necessity of reconciliation, testifies not only the word of God, but also the conscience of every man. But then arises this question, whether it was God, or man, or perhaps both parties, that needed to be reconciled. And in this question it is that the thoughts of God and man separate as far as heaven and earth. Just as soon as Adam had sinned, he received in his heart another image of God than he had had. Instead of returning, as a fallen son, to God with confidence, he fled from him with terror, hid himself from him and endeavored to conceal the truth from him. "The evil spirit had," as Luther expresses himself, "snatched the true image of God from Adam, darkened it and blotted it out of his heart." The change which had taken place in Adam's heart made him believe that God, also, had changed.

5. It is this thought about God that runs through the whole of the worship of the heathen. The heathen imagine God to be a dreadful being, and they always regard the hindrance to man's salvation as lying in a certain wrath or fierceness that has filled the heart of God in consequence of man's sin. Their worship is therefore always marked by ***fear*** and ***bondage.*** It is with reference to this that Paul says to the Christians: "Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption" (Rom. viii. 15). Therefore, the reconciliation which the heathen fancy is always a reconciliation which has its source in man, and its aim to appease God. They have only the light of nature to judge by, and therefore they judge of God according to

what they are themselves. This wrath in the heart of God they wish to appease, partly by gifts which they offer to him, as gold, silver, animals, and human beings, and partly by self-torture or pain inflicted on themselves. They think that his wrath will allow itself to be soothed by such means, and especially by seeing the sinful suffer. They well know that their own wrath is soothed by gifts, or by causing sufferings, or by seeing him suffer who has offended them; and so they judge of God accordingly. Such is their darkness. All their worship of God proceeds from the principle that God is ***angry*** with them.

6. But, alas! this idea we find not only among the heathen, but it is so deep-roted in all human nature, that it seeks to maintain its hold even where the word of God is known and read. From this wrong view of God it comes that men often consider Christ, whom God in his grace has sent to reconcile us to himself, as one on whom God has poured out his wrath, in order that he might be gracious to us. Yea, many truly living and dear children of God view this as the very essence of Christ's work, and they even fear that, if they may not believe this to be so, Christ would be entirely superfluous. They think that they never can escape the wrath of God, unless it has been poured out upon some one else in their stead. In their opinion, the chief significance of Christ is that he be a shelter or shield against God, or, so to speak, a lightning-rod for his wrath, in order that they may feel safe before him. May God open their eyes more and more. They do not understand what injury they are doing themselves by thinking worse of him than he deserves. God would fain, as any other father, like to be truly known by his children.

7. Contrary to all such perverse imaginations, the Scriptures teach that ***no change took place in God's disposition towards man*** in consequence of his sin; that, therefore, it was ***not God who needed to be reconciled to man,***

but that it was ***man who needed to be reconciled to God;*** and that, consequently, ***reconciliation is a work which proceeds from God*** and is directed towards man, and aims ***not to appease God, but to cleanse man from sin, and to restore him to a right relation with God.***

8. That no change of disposition in God towards man took place on account of man's sin, this may indeed far exceed our comprehension. Yes, we may be ready to call it the most unreasonable thing, that the love of God should not have suffered any abatement, or interruption, by the fall of man. But however unreasonable and foolish it may appear, still it is a fact. If you, with your little understanding, cannot comprehend such love, well, that does not alter the fact. It is far better for us that the fact, happily, remains as it is. And God has shown this in that he has so loved this sinful world, that he has given it his only begotten Son to be its Saviour. "With God there can be no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (Jam. i. 17). He remains the one he is from everlasting to everlasting. Dreadful is the injury and desolation which the sin of man has caused, but ***the desolation of changing the disposition of God, that is a thing man's sin has not been able to do.*** Just as the deluge, indeed, reached far above the highest mountains so as to destroy all life on the earth, but it did not reach to the sun to extinguish it or cool it off; so the sin of man was, indeed, enough to make all flesh on the earth depraved, but it could not change the disposition of God or make him any thing else but love. "God ***is*** love" (1 John iv. 8, 16). God has not only ***been*** love or ***become*** love, but he ***is*** love from everlasting to everlasting, ***perfect*** love. But perfect love can never be diminished, because it would then no longer be perfect. Only that which is imperfect can be increased or decreased.

9. Consequently, the love of God never needed to be restored by any propitiation, because it was never lost; it never needed to be increased, for it was never

diminished. God loves because he is love, and he continued to be love, in spite of our fall into sin. God's love for the world was not of one kind before the fall, and of another kind after the fall; and, again, it did not become of still another kind after the death of Christ. A higher degree of love cannot be conceived of than this, that God gives his only begotten Son. But with such a love he has loved Cain as well as the virgin Mary, Judas as well as John, Demas as well as Paul. Just as God lets his sun shine as mildly on the field of the ungodly as on the field of the righteous, and as he lets the rain fall just as copiously on the meadow of the ungodly as on that of the righteous, so he has given Christ for the ungodly just as well as for the godly; and this he has done, not as a help for himself to love them, but that he might help them out of sin, and help them to true love. Therefore Paul does not say that God ***increased*** his love to us by Christ dying for us, nor that the change supposed to have taken place in God's disposition by our fall was remedied or removed, but he does say this: "God ***commendeth*** his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. v. 8). And John does not say: By Christ laying down his life for us, the love of God has been restored to us. No, he says this: ***"Hereby perceive we*** the love ***of God,*** because he laid down his life for us" (1 John iii. 16). And again (Revised Version): ***"Herein was the love of God manifested in us*** [that is, in our case], that God hath sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins" (1 John iv. 9, 10). And when the Lord himself would by pictures illustrate this disposition of God, he related the stories of the lost sheep, the lost piece of money, and the prodigal, or the lost, son (Luke xv). The father of that prodigal son had felt grief, yes, deep grief, but his love had not in the least suffered decrease; he

loved his son none the less now than before. The shepherd had felt grief for the lost sheep, but he so loved it that for its sake he left the ninety and nine, and went after the one that was lost. And mark you: Christ is using these illustrations, not in order to show the disposition of God's heart before the fall, nor what it should become after his death, but in order to show us how it always had been and always is towards sinners.

10. But, perhaps, some one now says: "God had to be reconciled, not indeed that it might be possible for him to ***love*** man, but so that it might be possible for him to bestow his ***grace*** upon man. His love may, indeed, have remained unchanged, but without an expiation as a satisfaction no ***grace*** was possible for sinners." This is apparently a very important objection. And we will therefore first of all inquire: Is this taught anywhere in the word of God, so that we there may read about it? This question must be answered thus: No, nowhere. But whence, then, has this thought been derived? Answer: It has been derived from that wrong image of God which by the fall has been burnt into our natural heart. But this image cannot be harmonized or reconciled with the image which the word of God gives us. But furthermore we ask: Was it not grace that God gave his Son for the redemption of sinners? Can any greater grace be conceived of in heaven or on earth? Grace is a love that is wholly unmerited by him who is the object of it. But then, the sending of Christ into the world, his life, his death, and his work, all this is not a cause of God's grace, but a consequence of it, yea, the highest conceivable expression of this grace. For no manifestation of love has ever been so unmerited, no work of God has been such ***perfect grace,*** as just this manifestation and this work, that he gave to the world his only begotten Son. Yes, indeed, back of all the works of God are his love and grace as the ever unmoved and immovable foundation, the never failing,

but always overflowing fountain out of which issue all his acts of redemption. O may we allow our heavenly Father to be as good as he is. He is jealous of the honor to be considered just as he is.

11. "But," so some one will say, "though the love of God was not diminished by sin, still his justice suffered injury, and it requires satisfaction; his love is bound by his justice." To this we answer, first: It is nowhere so written, and in such important matters it is not advisable to teach anything else than what the word of God teaches. ***There is not to be found a single passage in the Bible setting forth the atonement as having its cause in this, that the justice of God needed satisfaction.*** But if some one says that this is, however, the spirit of the whole Bible, then let such a one, in the name of God, at once pause before this solemn question: How is it that just that which is said to constitute the spirit of the whole Bible, is nowhere written in the Bible? No; the spirit of the Bible is ***what the Bible says*** — that is certain. But love and justice are never in the Bible set forth as being in conflict with each other, so that one can bind the other. ***On the contrary, it is right and just both for God and men to love, to have compassion upon and to save sinners.*** It was righteous and ***just*** that God so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son for its salvation. Yes, nothing can be more just and righteous than such a love.*

* In translating into English the one Swedish word (*"rättfärdig"*, the adjective, *"rättfärdighet"*, the noun — the Swedish letter *ä* has the sound of the English diphthong *ai* in *air*), the word which the Author uses in this paragraph and in several of the following, I think it best to use both of the words, *just* and *righteous*, or sometimes *right*, and their corresponding nouns, *justice* and *righteousness*. There are in Swedish, as well as in English, two distinct words with this shade of difference in meaning; but the one means rather less than the word *just*, and the other rather more than the word *righteous*. The first is *"rättvis"*, literally *"right-wise"*, from which comes *righteous* (see the

12. To love those who are nearest to us, our friends and brethren, is indeed a just and righteous act; but it is a higher kind of righteousness and justice to love our enemies, and a ***perfect righteousness or justice is perfectly*** to love one's enemies. When, therefore, the Lord would teach his disciples to be ***righteous after the likeness of God*** he said: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you For if you love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?" (Matt. v. 44, 46). That is, if you love only your friends, then ***you are not more righteous than the heathen and the publicans*** can be, because they, also, love them by whom they are loved. Yea, what righteousness is it which God in the law requires as corresponding to his own righteousness? The Saviour gives this answer: "Thou shalt love God above all things, and thy

large dictionaries), but which, singularly enough, has not the meaning of *righteous*, but of *just*, and that in rather more of an outward, legal or moral sense than as an intrinsically virtuous or right disposition; it is found in the N. T. only as a translation of the but twice occuring word *endikos*, *just* (Rom. iii. 8; Heb. ii. 2). The same is true, also, of the noun "*rättvisa*", which like its corresponding English *justice* is not used in the N. T. at all, and in the O. T. less frequently than its English equivalent. The second of the Swedish words referred to, is "*rättfärdig*", literally "*right-whole*", that is, wholly right, or thoroughly right, both as to disposition and state. It comprises all that is generally meant by both of the English words, *just* and *righteous*, and is the common rendering of the Greek *dikaios*, occuring 82 times in the N. T. and variously translated in the Revised as well as in the Old Version: *right, meet, just, righteous*. Thus, also, its derivitive noun is equivalent to both *justice* and *righteousness*. As over against the very common theological notion of "divine justice", as mainly, if not only, exacting, harsh and severe, our Author shows the truth of these lines by Faber about this one of God's glorious attributes:

"Thy justice is the gladdest thing
Creation can behold." *J. G. P.*

neighbour as thyself". But by "neighbour" the Lord does not mean friends only, but also enemies, as he himself explains in the parable of "The Good Samaritan". To love enemies — remember this — ***to love enemies is therefore a likeness of God's righteousness.*** Imagine two men who have been offended. One of them says: "My righteousness, or sense of justice, is violated or offended, and requires satisfaction if I am to show any favor towards him who offended me." But the other one, so far from ***demanding*** any satisfaction, ***sacrifices*** all that he has, that he may restore and reconcile the offender to himself. Which of these two is like God? In which of them do you see ***holy, righteous*** love reflect itself? Judge for yourself. And if you are hesitating, ask: which one of them is like Christ? Because he — Christ — is the pattern and touchstone; he that is like him, is like God, because ***he*** is "the express image of God's substance" (Heb i. 3). He that loves like Christ, he loves with ***a holy and righteous love,*** such as the love of ***God*** is. Verily, the love which was in God showed itself to be righteous and holy just in this, that he did not seek ***satisfaction for himself,*** but ***salvation for us,*** yea, he sacrificed all — even his only begotten Son — for our salvation.

13. But let us hear yet another objection that perplexes many honest souls. Perhaps, if we hear it, we may untie some knot for some such soul. "Well," says some one, "certainly it is right and just to love and be gracious, and of course he is more righteous and more like Christ that does not demand any satisfaction for himself, but instead sacrifices all, in order that he may save the one who has sinned against him. But, still, there is in God ***yet another kind of righteousness:*** namely, the righteousness ***that judges and punishes,*** and ***this*** demanded satisfaction." To this we must again answer: It is nowhere thus written; and as something outside of the word of God, it is not well to assert any such thing. The Bible does not know

of more than one kind of righteousness of God, although this ***manifests itself*** in many different ways. Because God is just and righteous, he loves sinners and sacrifices all, that he may save them; he sends his Son, his Spirit, and his word etc. For to do such things is just and righteous. Not to love or not to seek to save sinners is not just or righteous. The person who does not love and try to save sinners is not righteous. Paul suffered all things, forsook all things and subjected himself to any thing, in order that he might "by all means save some" (1 Cor. ix. 22), for he was a ***righteous*** man and a partaker of God's righteousness. Without such love he could not have been righteous after the likeness of God.

14. Further, because God is just and righteous, he hates all sin and unrighteousness. Not to hate sin is never just or righteous. He that does not with all his heart hate all sin, cannot be just or righteous. No one on earth ***has loved sinners*** so perfectly and ***hated sin*** so perfectly as Jesus, for no one has in the matter of righteousness been so perfectly like God as he. To love the sinner is ***not a sort of righteousness different from that of hating sin,*** but it is ***another manifestation of one and the same righteousness.***

15. But still further: because God is just and righteous in his relation both to sin and the sinner, he threatens and punishes those who live in sin, and lets them taste of the hatred which he has for sin, so that they may repent and be saved. That father who does not in some way punish his child for wrong-doing, is not a just and righteous father, and has no true fatherly love. That government which does not punish criminals, is not a just and righteous government, and has no true love for its people. To punish in order to inflict evil on the one punished is unjust and unrighteous, and only he that is evil can do evil, but God is not evil, for he is love; but to punish in order to produce repentance is righteous, just, and good.

16. But still more: because God is righteous, he rejoices over each and every sinner that repents (Luke xv. 6, 10, 32), for it is just and righteous to rejoice over a sinner's repentance, and he who does not do that is not righteous. Therefore, all those who partake of God's righteousness rejoice over the repentance of sinners. Jesus, also, was glad over the repentance of sinners, but wept over the hardening of their hearts, because he was just and righteous like God. But further: because God is righteous, he brings into everlasting bliss with himself all those who are righteous, but separates for ever from himself all those who have gone so far, that they cannot be renewed to repentance and be made righteous. For him who is perfectly righteous, there is no suitable place but in heaven, because he is fit for no other place. For him who is perfectly hardened and unrighteous, there is no place in heaven, because he is fit for no place there. And it is just and righteous of God to put every one in his right place.

17. All — all the things we have now set forth — are not different kinds of divine justice or righteousness, but only different manifestations of one and the same justice or righteousness, which manifests itself differently under different circumstances. And this justice or righteousness can never change. Also these manifestations of it will, therefore, remain the same through all ages. To change the righteousness or justice of God would be to change God himself. His righteousness and justice are and will continue to be through all eternity such as from eternity they have been. Least of all has Christ come into the world to change them, for he is himself just and righteous exactly like and in the same way as his heavenly Father. Yea, ***it would be a misfortune for us,*** if this state and condition of God's righteousness and justice in any way were or could be changed. Righteousness is no antithesis to love, no limitation of love, no restraint or check on love.

On the contrary, perfect love is the perfect manifestation of perfect righteousness. Behold Christ. In him you can see and learn that, for he is "the brightness of *God's* glory, and the express image of his person" (Heb. i. 3).

18. "Well" — thus some one again objects — "this may indeed be true, but the wrath of God cannot be denied. Most certainly the Scriptures speak of that. The wrath of God had to be appeased through the death of Christ, if we were to obtain grace." — Answer: We will in our next chapter see what the word of God teaches concerning that subject. May God help us, that we may in all simplicity follow the teachings of his word, for "the testimony of the Lord *is* sure, making wise the simple; the statutes of the Lord *are* right enlightening the eyes;" and "the word of our God shall stand for ever," "it liveth and abideth for ever" (Ps. xix. 7, 8; Is. xl. 8; 1 Pet. i. 23).

CHAPTER II.

The Reconciliation with Reference to the Wrath of God.

19. ***"While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him"*** (Rom. v. 8, 9). In the preceding chapter we observed that the word of God nowhere teaches that God was to be reconciled through Christ, and that we ought not to speak of these things otherwise than the word of God speaks of them. But then, at last, this question arose: "What shall we say to all that which the Scriptures teach concerning the wrath of God? Did not the wrath of God need to be appeased? And did not this take place through the death of Christ?" — Well, let us see what God in his word says on this subject. We would say with David: "The testimonies of

the Lord are very sure" (Ps. xciii. 5*). Is it, then, anywhere written in the word of God that God's wrath ***was to be*** appeased through Christ's death, or that it ***has been*** appeased through Christ's death? If it is thus written in the word of God, then it must be held as true; if not, it must be given up. The question is, therefore: Is it written? To this it must replied: ***No, it is nowhere thus written.*** In the whole Bible there is no such passage. No prophet, no evangelist, no apostle, not John the Baptist, nor Christ either, has taught that the wrath of God was to be appeased through the death of Christ; and then it is not advisable for us to put any such doctrine into the word of God.** No; it is always safest to keep to the word of God.

20. But what, then, is the wrath of God? By the wrath of God may be meant ***that God hates all sin and unrighteousness.*** But this wrath of God can certainly never be appeased or changed. Just think how dreadful it would be if God should cease to hate sin. That would

* The Swedish Old (Authorized) Version gives these words, in conformity with Luther's German Version, so very expressively thus: "Thy word is a right [or true] doctrine." ("Dein Wort ist eine rechte Lehre"). *J. G. P.*

** It is now, presumably, both generally known and acknowledged that the passages in *our old* [as yet Authorized] *Swedish Version,* where the reconciliation of God is spoken of, are incorrectly translated. These passages are: Ex. xxx. 16; 2 Sam. xxi. 14; xxiv. 25; Mic. vi. 6; Heb. viii. 12. [Note by the Author, *P. W.* — To which I would add: These greatly mistranslated passages in the Old Swedish Version, like Luther's German, making God the object of the reconciliation or the atonement, (giving respectively, "He permits himself to be reconciled over their souls," "then was God reconciled to the land," "with what shall I reconcile God?" "I will be reconciled over their iniquities"; the last Luther gives: "I will be gracious as to their faults," compare Jer. xxxi. 34), are all quite well and correctly rendered both in the Authorized and in the Revised English Version. *J. G. P.*].

put an end to all hope of our salvation. For God would then no longer be just and righteous. Not to hate sin evinces an unrighteous person, as we have said now many times. If you see a man that does not hate sin, you can at once say: This man is not like God; this is not a righteous man. Hence we can readily understand that Christ's death did not make God to cease hating sin; and neither would there in that effect, if it were possible, be any salvation for us.

21. But by God's wrath can also be meant that God is displeased with, threatens, and punishes all who live in sin. But neither is this wrath of God at all quenched or appeased by the death of Christ. Nor ***can*** it be changed. Because, still, after the death of Christ, God is displeased with all who live in sin; even yet, this day, he threatens and punishes them, and will continue to do so. Paul says: "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men" (Rom. i. 18). Yea, ***after*** the death of Christ this wrath has manifested itself more dreadfully than at any time before, as in the destruction of Jerusalem. When the Lord predicted this destruction he expressed himself thus: ***"There shall be wrath upon this people"*** (Luke xxi. 23). Even to-day, it is true of all who live in sin, that they are ***"the children of wrath"*** (Eph. ii. 3). In Rom. iii. 5 the apostle says that "God ***visiteth with wrath".*** [English Revised Version]. For this reason he also exhorts the Christians: "Avenge not yourselves, but ***rather give place unto wrath"*** (that is, the wrath of God). (Rom. xii. 19). The wrath of God shall find them that do evil. In Eph. v. 6 and Col. iii. 6 the apostle says that because of sins ***"the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience."***

22. The apostle never intimates with as much as a single word that this fact has been changed by the death of Christ. On the contrary, his words show that it still ceaselessly continues. And it would, indeed, be a mis-

fortune for us if it were not so. If this relation were changed, then ungodliness and spiritual lethargy would so prevail in the world, that no one could be saved. But this wrath of God is no more a bar to his love than the true fatherly wrath in a man is a bar to his fatherly love. A father cannot be pleased with his child that lives in sin; but he can so ***love*** it, that if he could save it, he would willingly die for it. And he punishes it, that if possible he may save it. So, likewise, does God. What does also all experience testify even unto this day? Behold what punishments God suffers to come over individuals as well as over entire nations when sin gets the ascendency and prevails over everything. Yea, even believers, when they sin, must taste the displeasure of God and that often quite severely both in their conscience and in outward chastisements. Least of all did Christ come into the world to change this relation, because ***he himself*** has the same displeasure as the Father toward those who live in sin. We read in Mark iii. 5 about him, that ***"he looked round about on them*** [his enemies] ***with anger,"*** and in this wrath was the same divine earnestness as in the wrath of the Father.

23. But by the wrath of God may, also, be meant that at the last day, at the end of this age, he will for ever separate from himself all those whom it has not been possible "to renew again unto repentance" (Heb. vi. 6), but who have obstinately defied all his endeavors to save them. This is what the Bible calls ***"the wrath to come."*** Of this wrath John the Baptist says to the Pharisees: "O generation [offspring] of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" (Matt. iii. 7; Luke iii. 7). This wrath, surely, is not appeased; but just according to the threatenings of God it shall, at the last day, come upon all the ungodly, as Paul says: "After thy hardness and impenitent heart thou treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God" (Rom. ii. 5). Yea, Christ is so far from

having appeased this wrath, ***that just he himself is the one who will bring about and execute the sentence of God's wrath upon the ungodly.*** Therefore this wrath is called also the ***wrath of the Lamb,*** as when in Rev. vi. 16 it is said that the ungodly shall say to the mountains and to the rocks: "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the ***wrath of the Lamb.***" In the prophets, also, the breaking forth of the judgments of God's wrath is put in connection with the coming of the Messiah. Hence we can understand also this, that there never can be any question of appeasing this wrath.

24. Let us here again bring to remembrance the blessed words of our Saviour: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John xiv. 9; cf. xii. 45). Let us not get tired of listening to these words, as if we knew them to well, already. They are fully applicable here as to the wrath of God. If there be in God any wrath different from that found in Christ, then it is not true, that he that seeth the Son seeth the Father. For then the Son is not so like the Father as he says. Then neither is that true which the apostle says, that the Son is "the brightness [effulgence] of God's glory, and the express image of his person" (Heb. i. 3). When I then look on the Son I cannot say, "The Father is just like him," but, instead, I must say, "The Father is not like him." But now Christ is the very image of God's person, or substance, and hence we know that in God there is no attribute which is not found in the Son. What God loves, the Son loves; what God hates, the Son hates. Where God condemns and is angry, there also the Son condemns and is angry. The Father is not more "severe" than the Son, and the Son is not milder or more gentle than the Father. Perhaps you are amazed at such a saying. But quiet yourself before the word of God. It is no jest, but a divine truth, that "he that seeth the Son seeth the Father." That is just what the Father is like — he is just like Jesus. The wrath

of God is and continues to be the same that it has been just as long as sin exists. This wrath is in its essence nothing else than his hatred for sin. And as long as sin exists God must hate it. Otherwise he would not be just, or righteous. But this hatred of sin does not exclude compassion for those who are captives in sin. Christ, also, hated sin, but he had compassion upon sinners. God's people, also, hate sin, but they love and take pity on sinners, and that just because they are partakers of the nature of God, for such is God. O my friend, do you wish to see God, then stand not aside from Christ, but look right at Christ. Do not imagine that behind Christ stands a dreadful image representing God, but look right into the eyes of Christ (may the expression be allowed!). There, in him, you see the face of God. To do so will make you intimately acquainted with God, and happy in God, so that the words of Peter can be applied even to your faith, that ***by Christ you do believe in God*** (1 Pet. i. 21).

25. It is wrath against the ***person,*** and hatred of the ***person,*** which excludes or bars love. This hatred may be called ***personal,*** because its object is not ***sin,*** but the ***person,*** and because it wishes the ***person*** evil. Such is the wrath of the devil, as it is said in Rev. xii. 12: "The devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." And again, in 1 Pet. v. 8: "Your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." Such wrath the heathen think their gods possess, and therefore they labor to appease them. Such wrath, also, is often found among men, as the Scriptures say: "Their throat *is* an open sepulchre; the poison of asps *is* under their lips: whose mouth *is* full of cursing and bitterness: their feet *are* swift to shed blood" etc. (Rom. iii. 13 *et seq.*). This personal wrath will often allow itself to be appeased, sometimes by gifts, and sometimes by getting revenge. But

mark, this wrath in man is ***not a remnant of the image of God,*** but, on the contrary, it is ***a part of that poison*** which the serpent at the fall poured into the heart of man. In God no such wrath exists, for in him is nothing sinful or devilish. Therefore, neither in Christ, who is "the brightness of God's glory, and the express image of his person," do you ever see any such wrath. But if this wrath does ***not exist*** in God, then neither is there any need of appeasing it. No, "God is love," and love excludes all personal wrath. God cannot even be tempted with evil (James i. 13).

26. In John iii. 36 John the Baptist says: ***"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."*** The Baptist says by these words that those who live in sin are under the wrath of God, and since they will not believe in the Son, who comes to save them from sin, ***they will remain*** under the wrath or displeasure of God, and will never see life. On the other hand, he shows that ***he that believes in Christ has everlasting life, and is thus delivered from the wrath which rested on him while he lived in sin and unbelief.*** No passage can speak more clearly than this concerning the wrath of God, and no passage can more clearly show that the wrath of God is not appeased or quenched, least of all that it was appeased on the day when Christ died; because, ***even after the death of Christ,*** why this wrath ***abideth,*** as the Baptist says, on every one that does not believe the Son. But if it ***abides,*** or remains, why then indeed it is not appeased or quenched. To talk about a wrath being appeased, but still abiding, is the same as to talk about a fire being extinguished, but still burning. And what would that be?! Consequently, the wrath of God ***abides*** on every one that ***abides in sin*** and will not suffer himself to be saved.

27. But that ***the believer*** is delivered from that wrath which abides on those who live in unbelief, that depends

on his having ***become righteous by faith in Christ.*** But being righteous, he is ***taken out*** from the multitude of the ungodly, on whom abides the wrath of God, and now he belongs to the congregation of the ***righteous, on whom rests the good pleasure of God.*** In every home you can see a picture of this state. When a child lives in sin, it is the object of its father's displeasure and punishment; but when it leaves sin, then it becomes the object of his good pleasure; mark: not of his love, — for even while it lived in sin he loved it, — but of his good pleasure or delight, because a good father is pleased with or delights in obedient and well-behaved children. But that the sinner thus has become the object of God's good pleasure, by becoming righteous, that is not any change in God, but in the sinner who now has come into a new relation with God, and thereby has become a partaker of the good pleasure which God has towards the righteous. Further, this is not a change which took place on the day when Christ died, but ***it takes place the day when a man believes in Christ.*** For as long as a man continues in unbelief, so long the wrath of God abides upon him, as we see from the express words of John the Baptist. And never in the Bible is this change called the appeasing or the reconciling of God; and as we often have said, so we say again: it is always most wholesome to speak as the oracles of God speak (1 Pet. iv. 11).

28. Of another matter Paul speaks in Rom. v. 8—10, where he says: ***"While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by*** [or, more correctly, *in*] ***his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him; for if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by*** [or, more correctly, *in*] ***his life."*** In the first place, the apostle speaks here of something ***past*** when he says that we ***were*** sinners, and that Christ then died for us. Afterwards he speaks of something ***present***

when he says that we now ***are*** justified in the blood of Jesus, now are reconciled to God by the death of his Son. Finally he speaks of something yet ***future*** when he says that we ***shall*** be saved from wrath through him, we shall be saved in his life. Mark this connection. In this passage the apostle does not, therefore, say one word concerning the appeasing of God's wrath, but speaks only of our salvation from wrath. And this salvation he represents as something ***future.*** He does not say that we ***are*** saved from wrath, but that "we ***shall be*** saved from wrath;" and the words of the apostle must be read as they stand written. But what "we" does the apostle mean when he says: "We shall be saved from wrath"? He explains it himself when he speaks of us who ***were*** sinners, but ***now are*** justified in the blood of Jesus. Consequently, this passage treats ***of the future deliverance of the believers from wrath.*** Concerning this deliverance, or salvation, he says also this, that it will be accomplished by or in Christ's ***life;*** which shows plainly that it ***has not*** been accomplished by or in Christ's ***death.***

29. But what, then, is that future salvation of which the apostle speaks? Answer: ***It is the salvation from the wrath to come,*** — of which wrath we have spoken above. Of this salvation Paul speaks to the Christians in Thessalonica: "Ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, *even* Jesus, ***which delivered*** [more correctly, ***delivereth,*** as the Revised Version has it] ***us from the wrath to come"*** (1 Thess. i. 9, 10). But what, then, is "the wrath to come"? It is the judgment of wrath which will come upon the world at the coming of our Lord, and which he, our Lord Jesus Christ himself, will execute. From this judgment of wrath the righteous shall be saved. As God, before he let his judgment come upon Sodom, sent angels to rescue righteous Lot; as Joshua, before he let the judgment come upon Jericho, sent a messenger into

that city to take thence righteous Rahab, in order that not she, also, might perish in the general destruction; as the Lord, before Jerusalem was destroyed, gave his believers a sign to flee and thus in time saved them from that terrible judgment of wrath which swept over that city: so the Lord, the living Saviour, will take away his own, the righteous, from the judgments of wrath which shall come upon the world at his coming. Of this God speaks through the prophet Joel: "The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come. And it shall come to pass, *that* whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered; for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance" [or more correctly, as the Revised Version and the Swedish New Translation has it, ***"there shall be those that escape"***], "as the Lord hath said" (Joel ii. 31, 32). This is expressed in the viith of Rev. by forbidding the angels, who had the power to hurt the earth and the sea and the trees, to do any hurt until the servants of God had been sealed on their foreheads with the seal of the living God. A type of this deliverance of the believers from the wrath to come was the deliverance of the children of Israel from the judgment of wrath which befell the Egyptians through the angel of death. By their marking the door posts of their houses with the blood of the passover lamb, God delivered them from the general destruction which elsewhere swept over the country.

30. However the subject under consideration may be turned, there is nothing in God that could have been changed, whether by the fall of man or by the work of Christ. His ***love*** has not been disturbed by the fall of man, nor has his ***displeasure of evil*** undergone any change by the death of Christ. The latter (his displeasure of evil) belongs to his being and is an expression of his righteousness as well as the former (his love). Neither has the ***manifestation of his love*** been restrained by the

fall of man, because God has manifested his love in a higher degree after the fall of man than he ever did before. For the sending of the Son into the world is a manifestation of love of God, which in gloriousness so far surpasses everything else as the brightness of the sun surpasses the brightness of the stars. Neither has the ***manifestations of his wrath or displeasure*** been caused to cease by the death of Christ, for such are yet seen in all the punishments which God sends upon single individuals and upon communities; and at the coming again of Christ, such wrath will manifest itself more dreadfully than ever before in the judgment which will come upon the world.

31. From this we can easily understand why the Bible never as much as in a single line speaks of the reconciling of God, while all the religions of the heathen are occupied in appeasing him [or what they suppose to be gods]. To speak of reconciling God is just as foreign to the Bible as to speak of reconciling Christ. Is it true — we repeat it again — is it true, that the Father and the Son are one, so that he who sees the Son sees the Father, then, also, there is in the Son the same love, the same righteousnes, the same wrath etc., as in the Father. Hence, if one of them needed to be reconciled, then also the other needed or needs to be reconciled. As it is a fact of great significance, that the Scriptures never speak of Christ being reconciled, of his wrath being appeased, or the like, so it is a fact of equally great significance, that the Scriptures never speak of the Father being reconciled. And as little as one can say that Christ is reconciled when his disapproval of a sinner is turned into approval, because the sinner permits himself to be conquered by his love and believes in him, just as little can one say that God, the Father, is reconciled when his disapproval of a sinner is, in the same way, turned into approval by the sinner's repentance and conversion. The love of God and the love of the Lamb are one, and the wrath of God and the

wrath of the Lamb are one; and the Lamb is he that executes both the purposes of God's love and the judgments of his wrath. Think if any one began to teach that Christ must be reconciled! Who could not at once prove that such a doctrine is unbiblical? But since you know this, remember then again those blessed words of his own mouth: "I and the Father are one" (John x. 30, Rev. Vers.). To be reconciled, to be redeemed, and to be saved, are three different expressions for the same thing. And as certain as it is that the Scriptures, to the question, "Who was or is to be saved?" nowhere give the answer, "God," but only, "the sinner;" so certain is it that the Scriptures, to the question, "Who was or is to be reconciled?" nowhere give the answer, "God," but only, "the sinner." And we ought humbly to abide by the Scriptural way of speaking. Let us believe that God has spoken in his word just as he meant and not otherwise.

32. "Very well, but" — thus some one again objects — "God has said that 'the soul that sinneth, it shall die' (Ezek. xviii. 4, 20), and as a just God, he cannot take back his words without a compensating atonement." Answer: These words have never been taken back, and they never will be. ***It is still true, even to-day,*** "that the soul that sinneth, it shall die," and it will be true until the last day. No reconciliation in heaven or on earth can set at naught these words. To set at naught these words would be to set at naught the truth. But God is the truth. No; unto the end of days it is fixed what the apostle, long after the death of Christ, says: ***"The wages of sin is death"*** (Rom. vi. 23). He does not say, "the wages of sin ***was formerly*** death," — as if now in some way, by the death of Christ, this fact had been changed, — no; but he does say: "the wages of sin ***is*** death." ***Therefore, still, even now these days, do all those die and perish who live in sin.****

* When it is taught that Christ paid all sins, and hence that no one can be condemned for sins, but only for unbelief, then

But just as sure as sin is death, just so sure is righteousness life; therefore, also, the righteous shall live. It is never said in the Bible: "The soul ***that is righteous*** shall die." No; if any one is righteous, all the word of God says that such an one shall live. [See such passages as Ezek. xviii. 9; Hab. ii. 4; Rom. i. 17 etc.]. And the one declaration can as little be taken back as the other. Hence, if a sinner becomes righteous, ***he passes at once "out of death into life"*** (John v. 24, Rev. Vers.). Just as little as the Bible teaches that he who ***heretofore has been*** righteous shall live even though he ***now is*** a sinner, just as little does it teach that he who ***heretofore has been*** a sinner shall die although he ***now is*** righteous (Ezek. xviii. 20—32). Here, therefore, nothing is taken back. If the righteous fall again under the power of sin, then he comes under the word: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." If the sinner is restored and becomes righteous, then he comes under the word: "The just shall live."

33. Of this the whole of Ezek. xviii. speaks very fully, some passages of which we have referred to above. Let us read portions of what the Lord there says: "But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, ***he shall surely live, he shall not die.*** All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him" [Rev. Version: "None of his transgressions that he has committed shall be remembered

is taught a doctrine which is squarely opposed to the words of Paul: "The wages of sin is death." *All* sin brings with itself death, and that as well after as before the death of Christ. "If ye live after the flesh, ye must die," says Paul to the Christians (Rom. viii. 13, Rev. Vers.). And unbelief is sin; but unbelief is different from all other sins in this, that it is a rejection of that deliverance from sin which God in Christ offers the sinner. So far condemnation depends upon unbelief; for if the sinner believed, he would be saved from sin, but since he will not believe, he remains in his sins and in death.

against him"]: ***"in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live.*** Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God: *and* not that he should return from his way, and live? But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, *and* doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked *man* doeth, shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned" [Revised Version: "None of his righteous deeds that he hath done shall be remembered"]: ***"in his trespass that he has trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die"*** (verses 21—24). This is spoken as plainly as anything can be: if the righteous man becomes unrighteous, he shall die; if the unrighteous man becomes righteous, he shall live. But for those who think otherwise the Lord adds (vers 25): "Yet ye say, 'The way of the Lord is not equal.' Hear now, O house of Israel: Is not my way equal? ***are not your ways unequal?"*** As if he would say: "Should I be wrong, as ye think? No; far be it. I am right, but you are wrong." Then the Lord, ***for further certainty,*** repeats the same thing that he has spoken of before, and uses almost the same words (verses 26 and 27): "When a righteous *man* turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth therein; for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die. Again, when the wicked *man* turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive" etc. — The Lord very well knew that this thing needed to be said twice. May we allow it to enter our understanding and our heart. The truth is always the best gospel. The ways and judgments of God are always right. It is our heart that is wrong.

34. A most remarkable illustration of these truths we can read in the history of Nineveh. When Nineveh was living in sin and wickedness God caused the announcement to be made by the prophet Jonah that the city

should perish. But when Nineveh repented it remained standing. How could God in that case take back his word? Did he get a satisfying payment that induced him to do so? Answer: Not at all. The judgment of God concerned Nineveh living in sin. If Nineveh had continued in sin, then also the judgment would have been fulfilled. But ***Nineveh repented.*** "And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and ***God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not"*** (Jonah iii. 10.) The prophet did indeed wish that the judgment, which God had pronounced upon the ***wicked*** city, should be fulfilled upon the ***righteous*** city; yea, he was provoked at its not thus occurring. "But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry. And he prayed unto the Lord, and said, 'I pray thee, O Lord, *was* not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou *art* a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil. Therefore now, O Lord, take, I beseech thee, my life from me; for *it is* better for me to die than to live" (Jonah iv. 1, 2). In Jonah you see the thoughts of man; and as ***the grace of God came in conflict with them,*** Jonah became so angry that he wished to die. O how foolish it is to be provoked at God's abounding grace! But such is the darkness of nature. However, God stood by his right, reproved the prophet, judged according to truth, and let Nineveh stand. Think what a blessed lesson. Let us open our hearts fully for the inexpressible mercy of God.

35. Such passages of God's word reveal to us why the Bible never says that Christ should appease God; but rather that he should save men from their sins and make them righteous. Because all depended upon that, as we just have seen from the words of the prophet. For the unrighteous man (as such) there is no salvation, however gracious and merciful God may be; and for the righteous

man (as such) there is no condemnation, however righteous God may be. ***Yea, it is the very righteousness of God which makes it impossible for the righteous to be condemned.*** The righteous man belongs to God, because he is a partaker of the righteousness of God; the wicked man, on the other hand, is separated from God, because he is unrighteous. If, therefore, a way or means could be found to make sinners righteous, then that would be a way or means to save them and make them happy. This the apostle Paul makes especially plain in Rom. v. 18 *et seq.*, where, in effect, he says that the cause of the death and condemnation of "the many" is that through Adam's disobedience they "were made sinners" — the sin of Adam has extended to them all, and has brought death along with it. On the other hand, the condition of life and happiness for "the many" is that they "be made righteous." But can that be brought about? Is any means to be found by which this can be accomplished? Yes, God found such a means: namely, the only begotten Son — and he gave him, for he so loved the world (Joh. iii. 16). Through his obedience it is, says Paul, that "the many shall be made righteous," and thus be brought from death unto life, from condemnation unto blessedness. "He learned obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb. v. 8, 9).

36. In this connection we may consider a passage which often has been misunderstod: namely, Gen. ii. 17. When God forbade Adam to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in Paradise he added: ***"For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."*** Now often, suggested by these words, thoughts have been expressed like these: "This death sentence must be carried out; and to make it possible for men to escape it, it was necessary that some one else should suffer the threatened death in their stead; otherwise God would not be just."

But let us read the words as they stand. We ask: Who was it that should surely die? Answer: Adam, who ate of the tree. Did not God say: "Thou, or some one in your stead?" Answer: No; he said, ***"thou."*** All the rest is an addition by men. ***When*** was it, then, Adam should die? Answer: The same day he ate of the tree. Is it not written: "In that day thou shalt die, or some one else must die in stead of you ***some other day?"*** Answer: No; all such is added by men. God's sentence was ***that he who ate of the tree*** should die, and that ***on the very day when he ate.*** Are these words changed or taken back anywhere in the Bible? Answer; Nowhere. Was then this sentence executed on him who sinned, and in the day that he sinned? Answer: Yes, precisely as the words announced. In the same day that Adam and Eve sinned they died. They were alienated from the life of God; this was the spiritual death. Their bodies became subject to physical death. And had they remained in this condition, they would have been subjected to eternal death. The word of God ***could not*** come to naught.

37. But not only that. The fall of Adam brought sin into the world; and so death came upon all his descendants. Therefore, looking back on this dreadful ocurrence, Paul says: ***"The many died"*** (Rom. v. 15, Revised Version). He does not say that many now ***must have died if some one else had not died in their stead.*** No; he says, "the many died" — they really died, just according to what God had said. But if they were already dead, then no one could die in their stead — it is impossible for any one to die ***in stead of*** one who is already dead. The only thing to be done was to ***make the dead alive again,*** if that were possible. And it was possible. God found a means — and that was to give the only begotten Son. And he gave him. For he so loved the world. So little abatement had his love suffered through the fall. Shall we not joyfully praise God as we behold such love?

38. But the sacrifices — did not the Old Testament sacrifices with their blood betoken the necessity of reconciling God? Answer: What the word of God teaches concerning them we will consider in the next chapter. May God give us love for the truth, and a disposition to understand the truth.

CHAPTER III.

Concerning the Old Testament Sacrifices.

39. ***"And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood there is no remission"*** (Heb. 9: 22). In these words the apostle is speaking of how matters stood in the times of the Old Covenant. He has before shown how the Old Covenant was dedicated with blood; how Moses, after having read the law to all the people, sprinkled the book and the people with the blood of the sacrificed animals; further, how the tabernacle and also all the vessels belonging to the service were sprinkled with blood (Heb. ix. 18—21). Then he adds in our quoted verse: "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood," that is, within the jurisdiction of the Mosaic law, nearly all cleansings are performed with blood, so that there is no remission of sins without shedding of blood.

40. These are words of very great importance. The apostle here compares the Old and the New Covenants with each other, and points out the typical significance of the former with respect to the latter. But before we proceed any further, let us carefully look at the ***words,*** because they have often been greatly misunderstood. First, then, we notice that the apostle is speaking of the covenant of the law, and how matters were carried on under it. He says, in effect, that ***under the Mosaic covenant of law*** it is almost universally the case, that every thing is purged

with blood, and that remission of sins does not occur without shedding of blood. He is not speaking of the new covenant, but of the type he afterwards makes an application with respect to New Testament matters. Further we notice that he says, ***"almost*** all things" etc. He does not say, ***"all*** things." For even under the Old Covenant cleansing was sometimes effected without blood, as, for instance, by water or by fire, which we can see from Ex. xix. 10, Lev. xxii. 6, Num. xxxi. 21—24, and several other passages. But ***usually*** the case was that cleansing took place by means of blood. Likewise, it sometimes happened even that remission of sins was given without shedding of blood. For instance, when David had sinned with Bathsheba he was restored and forgiven without shedding of blood (2 Sam. xii. 1—15). In Lev. v. 11—13 we see that in a case of poverty the sin offering might be bloodless, and consequently remission of sin could take place without the shedding of blood. Such cases the apostle suggests when he says, ***"almost".**** However, he does not now devote particular attention to that point, but rather to the ***usual*** case or order: to wit, that under the Old Covenant there was no remission of sins without the shedding of blood. Finally, he puts the purging and the remission of

* Upon this little word, *almost,* which is commonly overlooked or altogether to lightly passed over by most expositors, the apostle has laid special emphasis; for which reason he has placed it at the beginning of the whole sentence. The construction and order of the words show, also, that it belongs to the *whole* verse and not only to the first part. [To this note by the Author the translator would add: Very strange and unwarrantable is the translation of this passage by the new Revisers of the English Version; they transpose, add, and then freely render the beginning of the verse thus: "And according to the law, I may almost say, all things are cleansed" etc. — and that without a marginal reading to show it might be differently rendered, and without italics to show what is added, and without authority from any ancient manuscript whatever! It is no translation, but simply a poor gloss or comment. *J. G. P.*].

sins together in a very remarkable manner, which we will soon more closely consider.

41. We can easily see that these words afford a very instructive suggestion concerning the Old Testament sacrifices, and we will now seek for an answer to the question, what these sacrifices did signify. For a correct understanding as well of the Old as of the New Testament this question is of the greatest importance. Did the sacrifices signify that God must be reconciled, or did they signify something else? We have already seen that in all the ***heathen*** sacrifices there was the underlying thought, that God must be reconciled; but here the question is, whether the sacrifices ordained by God himself had the same or some other significance. Has ***God himself*** anywhere explained their significance, and, if so, ***how*** has he explained it?

42. But before we set forth what God in his word says in explanation of the sacrifices, let us first see how men sometimes have misunderstood them. Often the way is cleared for the truth by removing misunderstanding. Concerning the Old Testament sacrifices men have often thought this way: "The righteousness, or justice, of God demanded that sin should be punished. Now, if the sinner himself were to escape punishment, some one else must suffer in his place. In no other way and on no other ground could sin ever be forgiven. Such penal suffering Christ was to endure for the whole world. On the strength of this coming payment God could in the Old Testament times forgive sins, and he always kept this ground before the people in the ever-recurring bloody sacrifices." It is a pious and well-meant idea that has found expression in this way of reasoning. May we now examine it in the wonderful light of the word of God.

43. First and foremost it is to be noticed, that there is no place in the word of God where it is said that God's justice, or righteousness, demanded that the punishment

must be endured by some one if sin should be forgiven. From the first line in the Bible to the last no such passage can be found, and without the word of God it is not advisable to assert any such thing. On the contrary, just the opposite is written in clear examples and words in the Bible. This we have seen, as considered in our preceding chapter, in the case of Nineveh, but most plainly in the words of the Lord by the prophet Ezekiel. There we read, namely, that if a sinner is converted and made righteous, then all his former transgressions shall not be mentioned unto him, and that on the ground which the Lord himself there states: to wit, that he has no pleasure at all in the death of the wicked, but rather that he should turn from his sins, and live. But to those who would not let such conduct on his part be true he adds, in effect: "Am I not right? O house of Israel, you are wrong" (Ezek. xviii. 25, 29). That the Lord judges in the same way also in the New Testament we learn from the parable of the ten thousand talents (Matt. xviii. 23—35). We there read that when the servant who owed ten thousand talents came to render an account, "he fell down and worshipped, saying, 'Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all'. Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and ***loosed him, and forgave him the debt.***" This conduct our Lord sets forth as an expression of how God forgives sinners, and as a likeness of how he requires also his disciples to forgive. There was no question of payment or compensation which some one else should make instead of the debtor. The Lord did never say, "I will forgive you all your debt, ***for another has paid it in your stead.***"

44. In the viith of Luke our Lord cites a similar instance. He says: "There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly [i. e. freely] forgave them both." Neither is there

in this passage the least intimation, that their pardon was due to the fact, that another had paid in their stead. Nor has the Lord ever represented it as unrighteous either for himself or for us to forgive without compensation. And if forgiveness could not otherwise take place, except on the ground of compensation, why then has God never said so in his word? Yea, why has he, on the contrary, as we have seen, represented just the opposite as the right way? Well, the case is this: it is more righteous to forgive for nothing than to forgive for payment, and therefore God is first and foremost in forgiving for nothing, because he is first and foremost in righteousness.*

45. All talk of payment for the debt of sin is wholly foreign to the word of God. A money debt can be paid; the bodily injury which I may have caused another by my sin can be recompensed with money; but the debt of sin** can never be paid. This the Lord represents in the

* If God, in the times of the Old Testament, forgave sins on the ground of a coming payment, then that would mean that in those times he forgave sins *on credit.* But that is a degrading thought concerning God and his righteousness.

** That is, the guilt, the wickedness or the wrong there is in sin and which it constitutes. It may be important to remark here that in Swedish (probably no less in English) religious speech and literature a great deal of confusion has been caused by the fact, that the one and the same word, "*skuld*", is used to designate both *debt* and *guilt.* Hence, in what follows of the text above I have had to translate the Swedish word now by the one, now by the other of the corresponding English words, according to the more predominant idea in the context; sometimes I have used both words in juxtaposition. As the old idea of cost and payment yet lingers in the English word *guilt* — from the Anglo-Saxon *geldan,* to pay, Old German *geltan,* to be worth, to cost, Swedish "*gäld*" (pronounced "yeld"), debt — the confounding of the injury done by an offense, or the fine, or mulct, paid for an offense, with the offense itself, is very common, yet, nevertheless, very erroneous; for sin is nothing less than moral guilt, or something morally wrong, an offense against God, which in its very nature cannot be paid or made good by any

above quoted parables by saying that the debtors had nothing wherewith to pay. To pay the debt or guilt of sin would imply that, by a payment, sin could be caused to cease to be guilt. But all sin is guilt; and no payment can make sin to be anything else than guilt, or transgression, or crime. The debt or guilt of sin can be forgiven, but never paid. Therefore, it can also be clearly seen, that in those Bible passages, where the forgiveness of sins is ***likened*** to a release from a debt of money (Luke vii. 41, 42; Matt. xviii. 24—27), ***not a word is said about payment,*** but only about ***remission.*** He who teaches that the world's debt of sin has been paid denies the very guilt of sin, that is, if he means any thing real or earnest by the payment. A paid debt is no longer any debt; and if the debt or guilt of the sin of the world is paid, then the world has no longer any debt and has no guilt; its sins are then no longer debts, and there is nothing of guilt or criminality about them.* But O how far is not such language from the truth of God's word! May God keep us from falling

one, nor by any means, but in order to be removed must be confessed by the committer and forgiven by God. *J. G. P.*

* It will not do here first to make a wide distinction between the *punishment* due to sin, as a sort of a fine, and the *guilt,* offense, or moral turpitude inherent in sin itself; and then to go on and say that it is the punishment which is regarded as a debt paid by vicarious sacrifice and suffering, while the offense, or the sin itself, must be repented of and confessed by the committer, in order to be pardoned by God. Such distinction and such teaching is not true in fact, for even yet God punishes sin and will still more hereafter punish it — all punishment of sin is a *natural* consequence of sin, — and to say that it is only the want, or absence, or neglecting, of repentance which involves punishment, would be the same as to say that the debt of *all* sin has not been paid; for unbelief, or neglect of repentance, is sin just as much as anything else is, and if the debt of *that* sin is *not* paid, why, then the final and worst of all debts remains unpaid and unatoned; if also that is paid, why, then it is simply impossible for any one to be justly punished or condemned by God, no matter what sin is committed. *J. G. P.*

into such error. Read, for instance, the first chapters of the epistle to the Romans, and there you can see whether the world has yet any moral debt or guilt, or not. But the debt can be ***forgiven;*** and how that is done the Lord teaches us by the prophet Isaiah when he says: "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Is. i. 18). ***What we need is to get rid of our debt,*** in whatever way that now may be done. According to our way of judging by nature, a payment to God would be necessary; but according to God's way of judging, sins are forgiven "without money and without price." A paid forgiveness is no forgiveness; just as the returning of a paid note is no gift. ***Neither does God in his word ever speak of any payment as ground, or reason, for forgiveness of sins.***

46. Secondly, the Scriptures never represent in any way that it is just, or righteous, to punish the innocent instead of the guilty. Imagine a father having a lost son, a prodigal, who comes to him like the man that owed ten thousand talents. Imagine, further, this father saying that he cannot forgive his guilty son, unless he may punish his innocent son in his stead. Do you think that he were a righteous father? Would you say that he acted like God? Far be it! Yea, even if the innocent son himself willingly offered to suffer the punisment instead of his guilty brother, do you think that then the father were righteous if he inflicted such punishment? Far be it! Or, if a civil government commenced to exercise such righteousness, so that innocent citizens were punished instead of the guilty, what would you say about such a government? Would anybody call it righteous or just? If officers of the law should reason like this: "When a crime has been committed, then justice must be satisfied by the infliction of suffering; as to the cause itself it makes no difference whether the guilty or some one else instead suffers; justice

is satisfied in either case" — would officers reasoning and acting thus be just? Far be it! That would be shocking injustice. But for God it would be just, would it?! Far be it! May we leave it to heathen people thus to think about their gods. But we, who have the light of God's word, ought to know that God is just and righteous, that there is "no iniquity with the Lord our God" (Deut. xxxii. 4; 2 Chr. xix. 7), and ***that the righteousness and justice which he enjoins on men is an expression of his own righteousness and justice.*** Neither is it ever said in the Bible, that God has inflicted punishment upon Christ instead of upon us. Yea, the prophet Isaiah represents it as a ***delusion,*** that the Jews believed that Christ was punished by God. The prophet says: "We did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted, but he *was* wounded for our trangressions, *he was* bruised for our iniquities." [Is. Liii. 4, 5; more literally and correctly Dr. W. translates the two last quoted sentences thus: "He was pierced through by our sins, he was crushed by our misdeeds"].*

47. In the third place, the sacrifices of the Old Testament ***could*** not express a penal suffering instead of the sinner. This can be seen from the following circumstances. The Old Testament offerings and sacrifices were partly bloodless ones, consisting of fruits and the like, partly bloody ones, consisting of animals, such as lambs, oxen etc. That the bloodless offerings did not express vicarious penal suffering we understand very well without any further comment. Of course, sheaves of grain, and other fruits of the earth could not suffer punishment. Hence, only the bloody offerings and sacrifices can here

* As it would be too extensive a matter here to make any comments on the fifty-third of Isaiah, we refer our readers to the exposition of this chapter which we have published separately under the title, *"The Man of Sorrows"*. [This work, also, is translated, and will soon be issued by the publisher of the treatise herewith in the hand of the reader. It is a book of 320 12mo pages in Swedish. — *J. G. P.*].

come under consideration. These were partly such as had in view the reconciliation of sinners, when they had sinned: as the burnt offering, sin offering, and trespass offering, that is, the expiatory or atoning sacrifices in general; partly such as were intended to express a person's gratitude to God for help received. That these latter offerings — that is, the meat offerings, and the peace or ***thank offerings*** (which last-named also were bloody ones, Lev. iii), — did not express a vicarious penal suffering is easily understood; because by them it was not a question of atoning for sin, but of expressing gratitude for favors received. But from these we see directly something which is of the greatest importance as to the question of the meaning of the sacrifices: to wit, ***that we must never draw the conclusion that a sacrifice expressed penal suffering just because it was bloody.*** When, therefore, it is concluded as to the sin and trespass offerings, ***that because they were bloody they expressed penal sufferings,*** then is drawn an entirely too hasty conclusion. Otherwise, the same thing must be concluded also as to the peace or thank offerings, since they likewise were bloody, as we now have seen.

48. But we need not longer tarry with this. Let us proceed to consider the sacrifices which were offered for atonement. We ask, then, if God has anywhere in his word explained these sacrifices so as to express a vicarious penal suffering. If God has explained them thus, then it must be so. But no; God has nowhere thus explained them. On the contrary, God's ordinance concerning these sacrifices is such, ***that it excludes every thought of vicarious penal suffering.*** For, in the first place, sacrifices were never allowed to be made ***for other sins than such as were not to be visited by death, or capital punishment.*** Thus, for instance, sins against the ten commandments were never to be atoned for by sacrifices. Sacrifices were never to be made for idolatry, sabbath breaking, adultery, etc. But if sacrifices were allowed to be made only for such

sins as were exempt from death, or capital punishment, how then could any one think that the animal which was offered suffered the punishment of death instead of the offender? Why, his sin was ***not at all*** liable to be visited by the death penalty. — Secondly, in a case of poverty the atoning sin offering might consist of fine flour (Lev. v. 11). But if the sin offering had been intended to express penal suffering, then it could ***never*** have consisted of flour, for how could offerings of flour express penal suffering? — Thirdly, it is written in the law (Deut. xxi. 1—9) concerning a manslayer who was not discovered, that the people — mark, ***the people*** — should be forgiven [literally, "atoned for," or "reconciled", vers 8] by the sacrifice of a young heifer. But of course that could not mean that the heifer suffered death instead of the people, for the people were not indeed guilty of the sin and had not deserved to die. That the heifer did not suffer death instead of the manslayer, either, is evident partly from the fact that the atonement, or reconciliation, did not have for its object the manslayer, but the people, partly from the fact that in Num. xxxv. 31 it is expressly forbidden to take ransom [literally, "atonement"] for the life of a manslayer*, and that just on the ground that he was guilty of death. If the manslayer was afterwards discovered, he himself must die, which shows indeed that the animal sacrified was not considered to have suffered the penalty in his stead.

49. Nor, finally, did the laying of hands on the victim (of which we read in Lev. iv. 15, 24; xvi. 21) signify that the penalty was transferred to the animal. This we can see, in the first place, from the fact that such laying on of hands occurred even in the case of the peace or

* Thus the Revised Version: "Ye shall take no ransom for the life of a manslayer, which is guilty of death: but he shall surely be put to death." The Authorized Version has the less correct terms "satisfaction" and "murderer". See the whole passage in Num. xxxv. 15—34 in the Rev. Ver. — *J. G. P.*

thank offerings, where there was no question at all of penalty (Lev. iii. 2, 8, 13); in the second place, from the fact that in Lev. xvith the laying on of hands is clearly represented to be an expression of the confession of sin (verse 21). Besides — and this is the most decisive argument — on the Day of Atonement the hands were ***not laid on the animal which was killed, but on the one that was kept alive,*** as it is written: "And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in [better, "even"] all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send *him* away by the hand of a fit man [or, better, "a man that is in readiness," or, "that is appointed"] into the wilderness: And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited [or, "a solitary land"]: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness" [Lev. xvi. 21, 22). If the laying on of hands had been intended to symbolize a transferring of punishment, it could at least never have taken place on the goat which was to remain alive.

50. But what then did the Old Testament sacrifices mean? You say, "It is not enongh, indeed, to know what they did ***not*** mean." True! Let us therefore examine how God himself in his word explains their meaning. We will then first examine how they are explained in the Old Testament, and afterwards how they are explained in the New Testament. May God send us his light. Upon his revealing, it depends what we are to see and understand.

51. First, then, we notice that it is never said in the Old Testament that atonement, or reconciliation*, was

* See the note on pages 5, 6, and 7, for a statement of the different English words, atonement, reconciliation, and propitiation, corresponding to the one Swedish word *försoning*. The English Bible (Authorized Version) evidently uses both the words, atonement and reconciliation, as synonymous; thus, for instance, the same general Hebrew word for atonement with all

effected by the ***death*** of the sacrificed animal. No; atonement was effected by ***the blood.*** And the blood is not explained as a type of or a figurative expression for ***death,*** but as a type of and a figurative expression for ***life;*** as the Lord says in Lev. xvii. 11: "The life of the flesh *is* in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it *is* the blood *that* maketh an atonement for the soul." [The last clause is better rendered by the Revised Version: "that maketh atonement ***by reason of the life;"*** or, still better, according to the Swedish new proof-translation: "for the blood maketh atonement through (or, by reason of) the life which is therein.*] Notice that the atonement is not ascribed to the blood by reason of the suffering or death which the

its various shades of meaning — *kaphar*, to cover, to purge or cleanse, then figuratively as to sin, to forgive — is rendered sometimes *atonement*, or, as a verb, to make atonement, sometimes *reconciliation*, or, as a verb, to make reconciliation, or to reconcile. See Lev. viii. 15 (reconciliation), verse 34 (atonement); so also in chap. xvi. 20, reconciliation; in all the other verses, atonement; in Ezek. xlv. 15, 17, 20, reconciliation, or reconcile. The Revised Version gives, generally, atonement, but in Dan. ix. 24 it retains reconciliation. Both words mean really the same thing, as do also such renderings (of the same Hebrew word) as "purging", "cleansing", "forgiveness", "ransom", and the like, all referring to some action of God himself, or of some one acting as his representative, directed upon man or his surroundings on account of sin and for the purpose of restraining it or its effects, and, ultimately, of removing it entirely. In translating the one Swedish word (*försoning*) I use the word "atonement" where the general Old Testament idea of considering the divine work in and by itself is the more prominent, but the word "reconciliation" where the idea of the effect of the divine work on man is or appears to be more prominent; sometimes it seems best to use both words in juxtaposition. *J. G. P.*

* For more information about this passage and its translation see my translation of the Author's little treatise; "The Blood of Jesus: *What is its significance?*" §§ 6, 22 (my note there), and 33. *J. G. P.*

shedding of it had caused, but by reason of (or through) the life that is or was in it. Then in verse 14 [according to the Swedish]: ***"For the life of all flesh is in its blood, and it constitutes its life."**** Not by ***the shedding of the blood*** was atonement made, but by ***the sprinkling of the blood.*** But what did this sprinkling signify? It signified ***cleansing or purging from sin,*** as the apostle in the text quoted above says: "Almost all things are by the law ***purged*** with blood." This, then, is what the type which lies in the Old Testament sacrifices corresponds to: namely, ***atonement is made for a sinner, or a sinner's reconciliation takes place, by his being cleansed from sin.*** This is not a mere deduction, or inference, which we ourselves have made, but it is just what the Bible itself teaches in definite and plain words, as we shall soon see.

52. The Hebrew word which in our [Swedish] translation of the Bible is rendered "*försona*" [English: ***atone,*** or atone for, or make atonement for, or ***reconcile,*** or make reconciliation for**] properly means ***to cover. To atone***

* In the English Authorized Version this passage is almost meaningless. The Revised Version uses circumlocution, but gets at the idea: "For *as to* the life of all flesh, the blood thereof is *all one* with the life thereof" (the *italics* indicate here, as is always the case with words thus printed in Bible passages, what words have no equivalents in the original). *J. G. P.*

** The Swedish verb *försona* is a clear transitive, taking for its object either the person or the thing. With a personal object (or any thing standing for a personal object, as tabernacle, house, land, etc.), it corresponds to *reconcile, make reconciliation for,* or, *make atonement for;* with the sin, guilt, or offense, as direct object, it corresponds to *atone, atone for, make an atonement for,* or, *expiate.* The Hebrew verb *kaphar,* or, as it occurs in the more usual form, *kipper,* is seldom used as a transitive active, but most frequently with the preposition *'al* (*over, upon*) before the person for whom atonement is made, hence, literally, *to cover over,* or *to cover up,* the sinner or what is affected by his sin. The sin or offense is connected with the verb by the prepositions *min* (*from*), *l'* (*to, as to*), *'al* (*over, upon*), or *b'ad* (*through, in reference*

for sin should therefore most properly be translated ***to cover sin,*** if we could use the expression. But that it does not mean merely a hiding of the sin is plainly seen from the way the word is used in other places. When, for instance, God says in Is. xxviii. 18: "Your covenant with death ***shall be disannulled,"*** the same Hebrew word is used for ***disannul*** that is used in expressing ***atonement for sins.*** Already from this use of the word we can surmise that when sins are spoken of as being covered, it does not mean that they are merely hidden under a covering, but that they are blotted out, or made void, as we ***blot out*** a writing by ***crossing over it.*** The same thing is expressed by the Lord in other words, as when in another place he says: "I have ***blotted out,*** as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins" (Is. xLiv. 22). ***In God's work of salvation there is really a question of blotting out sins so completely, that they shall no longer exist, but be entirely removed,*** as is darkness by the shining of the sun, or as is a cloud when it is wholly dissolved. And just in this consists the atonement which the sacrifices typified. The ***whole*** injury which Satan wrought God would bring to naught; he would not merely throw a cover over it, and then let it remain, ***but would wholly undo it.*** Yes, God be praised. Thus we have a ***complete*** gospel, a divine gospel, one worthy of God, a gospel that contains salvation for us.

to), thus giving the meaning: *to cover over the sinner from, or as to, his sin.* In the English Versions this second preposition is generally translated "as concerning", or, "as touching", or, "for" (cf. Lev. iv. 26, 35; v. 6, 13, 18; xix. 22). It is very interesting and instructive to notice how the Holy Spirit in the sacred writers more and more worked the word *kipper* into a fine deep spiritual meaning, so that in the later O. T. writings it is used almost exclusively with God as the subject and sin as the direct object, and evidently in the sense of *to forgive, purge,* and the like; and thus, also, it is translated in the Versions (see Ps. LXV. 3; LXXVIII. 38; LXXIX. 9; 2 Chron. xxx. 18; Is. vi. 7; xxii. 14; xxvii. 9; Jer. xviii. 23; Ezek. xvi. 63). *J. G. P.*

53. But let us proceed. Who is set forth in the first and foremost place as the one that atones for sins? Answer: It is ***God.*** But if God is the one who makes atonement for sins, then it cannot mean that he makes atonement for or appeases himself in regard to sins. No; it must mean that ***he*** atones for ***sin,*** that he really blots out ***sins*** — exactly as it is written. Thus we read, for instance, in Ps. Lxv. 3: "As for our transgressions, thou shalt ***purge*** them away" [literally, "thou wilt ***atone for*** them," or, "thou wilt cover them"]. And again, in Ps. Lxxviii. 3: "But he, *being* full of compassion, ***forgave*** [literally, ***"atoned for,"*** or "covered"] *their* iniquities, and destroyed *them* not." And again, in Ps. Lxxix. 9: "Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name: and deliver us, and ***purge away*** [literally, ***"atone for,"*** or "cover over"] our sins, for thy name's sake." Likewise we read in Ezek. xvi. 62, 63, the following beautiful words: "And I will establish my covenant with thee; and thou shalt know that I *am* the Lord: that thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am ***pacified*** toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God" [the last clause literally:" when I ***atone for*** thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord Jehovah"; of which the Rev. Version makes good sense in rendering: "When I have ***forgiven*** thee all," etc.].* Thus let us hold fast to this — for it is a "golden treasure" in the knowledge of God —: ***God*** is the one that atones and reconciles — mark well: not the one for whom atonement is made, or the one who is reconciled, or propitiated, but the one who makes atonement for sinners and for sins — for our sins.

* In such passages our [Swedish] Versions — even the last proof-translation — render the word "atone" by "forgive". Such rendering causes one who is unaquainted with the original text not fully to see how the word "atone" is used in the Old Testament.

54. Thus we have noticed the expression "atone for sin," or, "make atonement for sin" — forgive, blot out sin. Now let us note more particularly the other expression of a similar import in the Old Testament: ***God atones for sinners,*** or, makes atonement for sinners. For to atone, or to make atonement, for sinners is nothing else than to blot out their sins. Thus, for instance, it is said in Deut. xxi. 8 [according to the Hebrew]: ***"Make an atonement, O Lord, for thy people Israel, whom thou hast redeemed."**** What could it mean that God should make an atonement for his people? Answer: Nothing else than that he should blot out that sin which was clinging to the people — that he should cleanse and sanctify his people. Another passage where the same expression occurs is 2 Chr. xxx. 18 and 19, where we read: "But Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, ***The good Lord pardon*** [literally, ***atone for***] ***every one*** *that* ***prepareth his heart to seek God, the Lord God of his fathers, though*** *he be* ***not*** *cleansed*** ***according to the purification of the sanctuary"*** (that is, even if he be not purified according to the Mosaic statutes). What, then, did it mean, that God would make an atonement for those who "prepared their hearts" [better, acording to the Rev. Ver., "set their hearts"] to seek him, but who were not purified according to the law of Moses? Answer: It meant that he would cleanse them from that uncleanness which according to the law of Moses clung to them. This, too, is the explanation immediately given in the next verse, where it is said: ***"And the Lord hearkened to Hezekiah, and***

* Thus also according to the Swedish new proof translation. The English Auth. Ver. has: "Be merciful unto," etc. The Rev. Ver. has it: "Forgive," etc. *J. G. P.*

** As the italicized words, *he be cleansed,* have nothing corresponding to them in the original text, they might just as well have been omitted from the translation; or the words *atoned for,* understood from the beginning of the sentence, might here have been repeated so as to have made the clause read: "though he be not atoned for [or, reconciled] according to," etc. *J. G. P.*

healed the people," — listen: "healed," that is, sanctified and cleansed the people from their ceremonial and moral uncleanness. Well, we say it again: Let us keep it as "a golden treasure" in our knowledge of God, that he, God, is not a God who demands compensation or atonement for himself, but a God who himself atones for sins and sinners, that is, he cleanses sinners by blotting out their sins.

55. It is, also, precisely the very same thought which is expressed by the sacrifices of the Old Testament. Through the blood of these sacrifices the priest, as the representative of God, was to atone for those that were unclean, that is, in a typical manner cleanse them from their sins. This is expressed also in such a way that the priest was said to ***"atone for him*** [the one who had sinned] ***from his sins"*** (thus literally, according to the Hebrew, in Lev. iv. 26; cf. verses 20, 31, and 35*.) Think what a remarkable expression this is: "atone a sinner ***from*** his sins." But how plain does it not make the meaning of the word, "atone," when I consider what meaning thus God himself puts into it: namely, to cleanse, or, to sanctify. Therefore, to make atonement for, or, to reconcile a sinner "from" sin is to cleanse him from sin, and that is the work of God, and not of men. But God did that then in a typical or figurative way through the priest and the blood of the sacrifices. Just as in Ezek. xvi. 63 it is said (according to the original, as we have seen) that ***God*** atones for the sinner for all his sins, so in Lev. v. 18 it is said that the ***priest*** shall atone for the sinner "concerning the thing wherein he erred" [Revised Version]. It was the ***work of God*** even when it was done by the priest. But by the fact that God did it through the priest, he wished to give his people a prophetic intimation of the true priest, the only

* The English Versions translate the Hebrew preposition which corresponds to '*from*" (*min*, contracted into *mi*' or *m*') by "as concerning," or, "as touching." See note on pages 49 and 50. *J. G. P.*

begotten Son of God, who, as the representative of God, should *in truth* by his own blood atone for, or cleanse, sinners from their sins.

56. This significance of the sacrifices, that they should cleanse from sin, we find with special clearness set forth in the great sacrifice on the day of atonement, which sacrifice was the sum of all the sacrifices that were offered for sin. Let us therefore more clearly consider the description of this sacrifice as we read it in Lev. xvi. In the first place, Aaron was to make an atonement for himself and for his house by the blood of a sacrificed bullock and by the sacrifice of a ram (verses 3, 6, 11), that is, he should cleanse himself and his house from sin, that he might afterwards be fitted to make atonement for the people. After that he was to take two goats, and kill one of them as a sin offering for the people, but present the other one alive before the Lord (verse 10). Then first with the blood of the bullock, afterwards with the blood of the killed goat, he was to enter into "the holy place within the veil, before the mercy-seat," and sprinkle it (the blood) upon the mercy-seat and before the mercy-seat. When he had come out from the inner holy place, then he was, in like manner, to sprinkle the blood upon the tabernacle (the outer holy place), and particularly upon the altar there (verses 14—19). And mark, God calls these actions ***"to make atonement for the holy place," "to make atonement for the tabernacle," and "to make atonement for the altar."*** But how does he explain this atonement? Is it explained in such a way, that God should thereby become gracious toward the holy place, the tabernacle, and the altar? No; but this is what is said in verse 16: "And he [Aaron, the high priest] shall ***make an atonement for the holy place, because of* the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of* their transgressions in***

* Instead of the words *"because of"* in the English Versions

all their sins." But if we wish to know what it means to make an atonement for the holy place "from" sins [that is, "for", or, "as to", or, "because of" sins], then we are plainly told, in the 19th verse, that it means to ***"cleanse*** it, and ***hallow*** it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel." Some one, objecting, may say: "But the holy place could not really have any sins from which it needed to be cleansed." Answer: The cleansing of the tabernacle was a type of the cleansing of the people. Therefore, also, it is said that the holy place, the tabernacle, and the altar should be cleansed ***"from"*** [thus literally; the Versions have it: "because of"] ***"the transgressions of the children of Israel"*** (verse 16). Here, then, not a word is said about appeasing, or propitiating, or reconciling God. No; all had for its aim the blotting out of sins and the cleansing of the sinner. It is — we repeat it again with joy — ***it is God, the ever faithful Jehovah, the God of Israel, who in the sacrifices of atonement reveals himself as the one who atones for, or cleanses, his sinful people from all their sins.****

the Hebrew has *"from"* (the preposition *min,* as observed in previous notes). *J. G. P.*

* In the Old Testament the expression "to atone for sin" is used also with the meaning: "to procure the forgiveness of sins by intercession." Thus Moses, for instance, speaks to the people who had worshiped the golden calf: *"Ye have sinned a great sin: and now I will go up unto the Lord; peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin.* And Moses returned unto the Lord, and said, 'Oh, this people have sinned a great sin Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin —; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written'" (Ex. xxxii. 30—32). Of such an atonement of sin the apostle James speaks in chap v. 14 and 15, where he says: "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; *and if he have committed sins they shall be forgiven him."* Hence, this is something which is continually taking place in the Christian

57. O how beautifully and sweetly has not God, in that wonderful sacrifice of atonement, set forth what significance *he* meant there should be in that which he called atonement! But in order that we may be still more certain, let us look also at the last part of this expiatory sacrifice, or the treatment of the live goat. This goat was to be presented alive before God, and ***atonement be made "for him"*** [thus literally and truly in vers 10 of Lev. xvi. The rendering of the phrase in the Engl. Rev. Ver. is correct, and the only rendering that is admissible, "for" denoting the direct object of the atonement, here as everywhere else]. What does it mean that atonement should be made for ***the goat?*** Just think what a remarkable expression: the goat should be atoned for. That can indeed never mean that God should be appeased, or propitiated, or reconciled. No; "atone for" means here the same thing as at other places, to wit, ***make holy, sanctify, or cleanse.*** That atonement should be made for the goat meant, therefore, that in a typical or symbolical way he should be ***santified*** [separated, or dedicated] for the purpose of carrying off the sins of the people. For we read in verse 21 that the sins of the people were to be confessed over the live goat; and then that goat was to be ***sent out into the wilderness, and on himself carry away all the iniquities of the children of Israel into the wilderness.*** Think what a lifelike painting! Let us repeat it once more: the thing purposed by God in the atonement was ***the cleansing of the people by the taking away of their sins.*** And this did ***God*** do through the high priest in a symbolical manner by the sacrifice. Therefore, finally, in verse 30 it is said, as a complete explanation of this great sacrificial act: ***"For on this day shall atonement be made for you, to cleanse you;***

church, to wit, that one in this way atones for the sins of another. But it is evident that this is quite a different thing from that which is spoken of *God* when it is said that he atones for sin.

from all your sins shall you be clean before the Lord.''* Hear, and hear it over again: "atonement made ***for you''*** — not for God; — ***your*** reconciliation — not the reconciliation of God; — so that ***"ye shall be cleansed*** from all your sins" — not that God should be appeased from all his wrath. Thus reads God's own clear explanation, and that must be reliable. Praise be to God for ever.

58. Consequently, from the Old Testament itself we obtain the most definite and the most ***reliable*** explanation of the significance of the atoning or expiatory sacrifices, and what kind of atonement was accomplished by them. From this explanation we have found: 1. that the atonement which was typified by the sacrifices never aimed at appeasing or compensating God by means of vicarious penal suffering; 2. that, for this reason, God is never in the law of sacrifices mentioned as the object of the atonement;** 3. that the atonement typified by the sacrifices

* Thus the Revised Version, which is substantially like the Swedish: "On that day your atonement [or, reconciliation] is made, so that ye shall be cleansed," etc. The Auth. Version needlessly inserts "*the priest*" in the first clause, and makes that clause active instead of passive. — *J. G. P.*

** Sometimes men have tried to make out that the Scriptural expression, "to atone for sins," properly means: "to make atonement or satisfaction unto God in regard to sins," or, "to make God propitious (or, to conciliate God) in regard to sins." But how unbiblical this idea is can be seen from such passages as, for instance, Lev. x. 17, where mention is made of making "atonement for the sins of men before the Lord," which accordingly should mean: making atonement or satisfaction unto the Lord before the Lord in regard to the sins of men! — or making the Lord propitious before the Lord, or conciliating the Lord before the Lord, etc.! Likewise from such passages as, for instance, the one quoted above, Lev. iv. 26, where it is said that atonement should be made for a sinner "as concerning his sin" [literally, "from his sin"]. What place in such an expression has the thought of making atonement or satisfaction unto God, or of making God propitious, or of conciliating God in regard to sin?! [What meaning could there be in an "explanation" like

consisted in the taking away of sins, and the cleansing of sinners before God; 4. that, therefore, always ***sinners*** or ***their sins*** are set forth as the objects of the atonement; 5. that God is spoken of as the one from whom the atonement proceeds. Noticing carefully this explanation of the atonement by the Old Testament itself, who cannot then see how one and the same great divine thought runs through all the redemption works of God: to wit, ***man*** — man, deceived by the cunning of Satan — man, gone astray and lost in sin — man, wandering from and hostile towards God — man is to be saved from sin; God wills it, for he is love. ***God*** is the one who is to accomplish this; he alone is able to do it — he, God, the eternally unchangeable and faithful God. O my soul, sink down, sink deep down into this thought. The deeper you sink down into it, the more it will lift you up: up — up to the eternally faithful and righteous God, the God with a

this: "The priest should make God propitious in regard to sin for the sinner from his sin"? On the other hand, how clear and grand is not the meaning according to God's own explanation of the atonement by the sacrifices: The priest should on behalf of God cleanse the sinner from his sin; or, in other words, by accepting the sacrifice which the sinner brought, who thereby expressed his repentance and confession of sins, and his devotion to God, the priest should give assurance that the sinner, thus sacrificing, had his sins blotted out. — *J. G. P.*]. And besides this, please notice that when the Old Testament writers *mean* to say "appease any one," or, "pacify the wrath of any one," then they express themselves just as they mean. Thus Jacob says in Gen. xxxii. 20: "*I will appease him* (Esau) with the present," etc. There, to be most accurate, the words read thus: "I will cover his (Esau's) face," etc. In Prov. xvi. 14 it is said: "The wrath of a king *is as* messengers of death: *but a wise man will pacify it.*" [See verse 6 in the same chap. for the general deep spiritual meaning of the word "purged," literally, "atoned for." — J. G. P.] Hence, "to appease Esau," and "to pacify the wrath of a king," this indeed does the Bible say. But "*to appease God.*" that it nowhere says, and why?

father's heart greater than all fathers' hearts in heaven or on earth.

59. But what the New Testament says concerning the sacrifices we will reserve for the next chapter. God, our Father in heaven, take away all veils from our eyes and all deceit out of our hearts, that we may be fitted to look into the endless riches of thy truth and grace, as they are in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

CHAPTER IV.

Concerning the Sacrifices according to the New Testament.

60. ***"But now once in the end of the world*** [or, ages] ***hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself"*** (Heb. ix. 26). In the preceding chapter we have seen how the Old Testament explains the sacrifices which were appointed by the law of Moses; and we are now to examine if, and how, the New Testament explains them. What have the apostles seen in the sacrifices of the Old Testament, and how have they, in their New Testament writings, applied the doctrines which they found in them? — behold, these are questions which indeed must be of great importance to us. It might, perhaps, be so that the apostles through the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit saw a greater and deeper significance in the sacrifices than Moses and the prophets could have seen. Let us therefore conscientiously search into this matter.

61. As we read John xi. 55 we find a little word which at first seems insignificant, but which on closer notice is forthwith fitted to throw light on the sacrifices. This is what there is said: ***"The Jews' passover was at hand: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the passover, to purify themselves."*** Mark the little word ***"purify"*** themselves (or, as the expression of

the evangelist most properly means, ***"sanctify"*** themselves). He that would approach the Lord must be clean (Gen. xxxv. 2). When, for instance, the children of Israel were to appear before God at Sinai, God said to Moses: ***"Go unto the people, and sanctify* them*** to-day and to-morrow, and let them wash their clothes . . . And Moses went down from the mount unto the people, and ***sanctified*** the people" (Ex. xix. 10, 14). If any one had become unclean according to the Mosaic statutes, he must first purify himself before he could eat the paschal lamb before the Lord. The evangelist means to say that, for this reason, many such as were "unclean" went up to Jerusalem somewhat in advance of the passover feast itself, in order that they might have time to purify, or sanctify, themselves before the feast proper commenced. Such purifications were done partly by washing, and partly by sacrifices Consequently, the meaning of the sacrifices according to this Scripture passage was that they were to purify, or sanctify, those who in some way were unclean according to the law of Moses.

62. In Heb. ii. 17 and 18 we read the following words: ***"In all things it behoved him*** [that is, Christ] ***to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things*** *pertaining* ***to God, to make reconciliation*** [the Revised Ver. has ***"propitiation"***] ***for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted."*** There is no doubt that the apostle in these words refers to the sacrifices of the Old Testament whose typical significance he sees fulfilled in Christ. He, Christ, by being made like unto his brethren, and by his own temptations and sufferings, was to become a faithful highpriest for them who are tempted and suffer. And his work as

* In this passage the Septuagint [the Greek translation of the Old Testament] uses the same Greek word that is used in John xi. 55, and which in our versions is rendered "purify."

high priest was to make ***propitiation*** for the sins of the people. The apostle does not say, "to propitiate God," but, "to make propitiation for the sins of the people," precisely as in the Old Testament it was said of the significance of the sacrifices. But how was this to be done? We can understand that from the type. As the high priest, during the times of the Old Testament, ***in a typical manner*** made atonement for sins by sacrifices, which act was explained to mean that he sanctified and cleansed sinners from their sins; so Christ, as the true high priest, giving himself up for a sacrifice, was ***in truth and reality,*** by means of his blood, to cleanse sinners from all their sins, and to present them in the sight of God holy and righteous, not having spot or wrinkle. As John says: "The blood of Jesus his Son ***cleanseth us from all sin"*** (1 John i. 7). But to cleanse is to cleanse, or purify, and nothing else. Perfect purity from sin — for this the high priests of the Old Testament were groping with their sacrifices. But they never grasped or reached it. The blood of Jesus, however, — it really cleanses from all sin; and when once all his work shall have been consummated, then there shall stand around his throne a great multitude, which no man can number, a multitude of human beings pure and holy like himself. And were you to ask how they have become so pure, they would answer that they ***"washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb"*** (Rev. vii. 14). Mark, mark, not that they by the blood of Jesus have ***appeased God;*** no, but that they in the blood of Jesus have ***washed their robes.*** Yea, perhaps you yourself will stand there among that multitude — will you?

63. But especially in the ninth and tenth chapters of the epistle to the Hebrews it is permitted us to look more deeply into the mystery of the Old Testament sacrifices in the light of the New Testament. After the apostle has, in the beginning of the ninth chapter, described the

sanctuary, and has shown that the Old Testament sacrifices never could make them that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience, then he adds: ***"But when Christ came as a high priest of the good things to come, he entered in through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, one not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation, nor yet through the blood of goats and calves, but through his own blood, once for all into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption"*** (verses 11 and 12*). In the blood of the Old Testament sacrifices there was never any real deliverance from sins. The high priests went again and again into the holy place with the blood of goats and of calves; but they never found the sought-for redemption or deliverance. But in the blood of Jesus redemption is found from all sin forever. The blood of Jesus cleanses really from all sin; and just therein the redemption consists — real deliverance from sin.

64. But let us now hear how the apostle more definitely explains the matter. In verses 13 and 14 (of Heb. ix.) he says: ***"For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling them that have been defiled, sanctify unto the cleanness of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish unto God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"*** [Revised Version]. What was it the apostle said? Here, indeed, it behooves us, as it were, to spell and syllabify each word. Because we are like children who from the beginning have acquired the habit of reading carelessly, and for whom there is no other help than to begin to spell out the words as if they never before had seen a book. What, then, according to the idea of the apostle, were the sacrifices of

* Translated from the Author's (P. W.'s) Swedish rendering, in which it appears that the clauses and the sentence as a whole are more plainly constructed than in either of the English Versions. — *J. G. P.*

goats and oxen meant to do? Answer: To appease God? No; but ***to sanctify the unclean unto an outward cleanness.*** To effect any spiritual cleansing or to make the worshippers perfect as touching the conscience, that they could not do (verse 9). "For the law made nothing perfect" (Heb. vii. 19). But the sacrifices of the Old Testament were only types. In the New Testament there is a better sacrificial blood, the blood of Jesus Christ, who through the eternal Spirit has offered himself unto God; and what was its significance according to the idea af the apostle? Did he say: "How much more, then, shall the blood of Christ appease God, so that again it may be possible for him to be gracious unto us"? No; but he did say this: "How much more shall the blood of Christ ***cleanse your conscience, from dead works to serve the living God.***" Hence, here also we have the same doctrine, the same blessed gospel of God. To cleanse — to cleanse from sin, ***that*** is the power of the sacrificial blood in the New Testament. The sacred blood of Jesus cleanses from sins "though they be red like crimson."

65. Further on in the same chapter the apostle shows how almost all things in the old Covenant are purged with blood, so that without shedding of blood there is no remission of sin (of which matter we have previously spoken), and then he adds (verse 23): "*It was* ***therefore necessary that the patterns*** [copies] ***of the things in the heavens should be purified with these*** [viz., Old Testament sacrifices]; ***but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.***" Hence, according to this, what significance does the apostle see in the sacrifices of the Old Testament? Answer: That they were to ***purify,*** or ***cleanse,*** the typical sanctuary. And this, also, is precisely what is written in Lev. xvi., as we saw in our preceding chapter. But better sacrifices, namely Christ's, were necessary to cleanse "the heavenly things themselves," that is, the heavenly sanctuary. Whatever the apostle may mean by

the heavenly sanctuary — yet surely we must see that he sets forth the meaning of the sacrifices to be that of ***cleansing.*** And in one of the following verses he explains this cleansing as meaning that Christ once for all now at the end of the ages has been manifested ***"to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself"*** (verse 26). In verse 28 he repeats the same thought, saying: ***"Christ was once offered to bear*** [that is, for the purpose of bearing or taking away] ***the sins of many,"*** Thus what in other places is called atonement for sins through sacrifices, that is here called a ***putting away**** of sins, or a ***bearing them away.*** But to put away or bear sins is really to take them away, not to throw a covering over them, that God may not see them although they remain; no, but it means to put them away, to remove them, and present before God those who heretofore were sinners as now ***truly*** holy and cleansed from all evil. And this is the work of ***God,*** the work which he himself in Christ carries out. This, too, is ***the essence of the atonement*** as typified in the sacrifices. With ***any thing less neither God can be satisfied nor man be happy.***

66. But we pass on to the tenth chapter. There the apostle says: ***"For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image*** [standard, or essence] ***of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they*** [the Old Testament worshippers] ***offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they*** [the sacrifices] ***not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins"*** (verses 1 and 2). Hence,

* To show what meaning lies in this expression of the apostle (*"put away,"* in verse 26), we will here remark that it is the same word which the apostle uses in Heb. vii. 18, where he says: "For there is verily a *disannulling* of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof" — [these two passages (Heb. vii. 18 and ix. 26) being the only ones in the New Test. where the word occurs as a noun; as a verb it occurs in several, as *e. g.* 1 Cor. i. 19, Gal. ii. 21, iii. 15. — *J. G. P.*]

what significance did the apostle see in the sacrifices? Answer: That of perfecting or ***perfectly cleansing sinners from sin.*** But this the sacrifices of the Old Covenant could not do. They could ***represent*** sins as taken away, but could not take them away. Wherefore they really came to mean rather a yearly remembrance of sins than a blotting out of them (verse 3). They could, indeed, as we have seen before, effect a cleanness of the flesh (Heb. ix. 13), but they could not effect a real, spiritual cleansing or deliverance from sin. ***"For,"*** the apostle adds, ***"it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins"*** (verse 4). Listen, here, consequently, we have it again: not to appease God, but to take away sins — that was the question. Not to throw a covering over the sins, and then let them remain; but to take them away — that was the atonement-idea which lay in the sacrifices. Next, the apostle quotes the words of the Messiah in Ps. xl: "Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God." And he, the apostle, adds: ***"By the which will*** [or, ***in consequence of which will***] ***we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once*** *for all*" (verse 10). What, again, does the apostle here say? "By which will" — whose will? Answer: ***God's*** will. And "we," says the apostle — who, what "we"? Does he mean the world? Why, no; he did not write to the world, but to the believers, such as were chosen out of the world. And what had taken place by (that is, in consequence of) that will of God? Answer: That Christ had come into the world, and, by the offering of himself once for all, had ***sanctified those who believed in him.*** Hearken, here it is yet once more: to sanctify sinners, really to cleanse them from sin, that it was which the oft-repeated sacrifices of the Old Testament were indeed able to typify, but never to effect; but that is just what the sacrifice of Christ, once for all made and never to be repeated, does not typify, but does really accomplish in all them that believe in him.

67. But the apostle in continuing begins, as it were, over again, in order to impress the matter more thoroughly, when he adds: ***"And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering often times the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins"*** (verse 11). Hear, there you find again what the question is about — not to render payment to God, but ***to take away sins.*** And the apostle uses a word [*peri-elein*, to remove or carry away round about or on all sides] which indicates that we are on all sides surrounded by sins, which entirely enclose us as the walls of a prison. Then he adds: ***"But this man"*** (that is Christ), ***after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool"*** (verses 12 and 13). As though the apostle would say: He needs not to come again, in order to renew or repeat his sacrifice, as the priests of the Old Covenant did. ***"For,"*** he adds, ***"by one offering"*** — not by a multitude of offerings — ***"he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified"*** (verse 14). Consequently, once more: to perfect, to sanctify — that was the aim and object of the sacrifices, of the Old Testament sacrifices and of Christ's sacrifice. That the apostle so ceaselessly repeats the same thing shows how great an emphasis he has put thereon. The Old Testament had many offerings, yet these could never make any one perfect. The New Testament has only one offering, and by that, says the apostle, the Lord has "perfected for ever them that are sanctified." The high priest in the Old Testament, when he had sanctified the people, could never say: "I have now by this offering perfected for ever the sanctified." No; after a little while the sacrifice had to be done over again. But the sacrifice of Christ extends in its effects over all time. All who hitherto have been sanctified have been perfected by this offering. But what it hitherto has accomplished, it will also henceforth accomplish. It never needs to be repeated, but one and the

same sacrifice shall continually until the end of days — yea, throughout ages to come — perfect all them that are sanctified by faith in Jesus (Acts. xxvi. 18).

68. To the sacrifices of the Old Testament also the apostle John has reference when he says that Christ is the propitiation for our sins. His exact words are these: ***"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate*** [or, ***a helper***] ***with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for our's only, but also for*** *the sins of* ***the whole world"*** (1 John ii. 1 and 2). For the apostle it was an important matter, that the believers should not sin. But if it so happened that any one sinned, he would not turn him away from the mercy-seat, or turn him over to death or the devil. No; God forbid. On the contrary, he directs the attention of such a one to the fact that, with the Father in heaven, or at the right hand of the Father in heaven, he has a helper to whom he may turn. The apostle uses here a word about Christ [*parakletos*] which properly means "one called or sent for," that is, one that is sent for or called to the help or assistance of any one in whatever case it may be. The same word is used also of the Holy Ghost, and is then commonly translated "Comforter" (John xiv. 16, 26; xv. 26; xvi. 7). Therefore, if you have sinned, do not think this way: "Now all hope is gone, and I must despair;" but make haste to this your exalted Helper, Jesus, who is with the Father. He can help you, for "he is righteous," the apostle says; "and he is the propitiation for the whole world" [thus correctly rendered by the Revised Version]. If he himself were a sinner, he could not help sinners; but now he is righteous, as God is righteous, wherefore he is the right man for sinners to go to. Think what a comforting representation this is of true righteousness.

69. ***"And he is the propitiation for our sins"*** says the apostle, ***"and not for our's*** [the believers'] ***only, but also***

for the whole world." Mark the words. They do not say: "He ***has paid,*** or ***purchased*** a propitiation, for our sins." No, it is not thus written, and therefore no one ought to read it (or understand it) as if it were thus written. Consequently, what here is written is this: "He ***is*** the propitiation." Further, it is not written: ***"This or that work*** of Jesus is the propitiation." It is not written: "His ***sufferings*** and ***death*** constitute the propitiation." No, the words do not say so, and therefore no one ought to read (or understand) them as if they did say so. No; but this they say: ***"He*** is the propitiation" — he, he himself in his own person. But what does that mean? Let us see. We can learn the meaning of this from other similar expressions. In John xi. 25 the Lord says of himself: ***"I am the resurrection, and the life."*** Now, what does that mean? Answer: Why, of course, that he as the divine Saviour is ***the one that raises the dead, and quickens them to life.*** David often says of God: "He is my peace," "my salvation," "my consolation," etc., that is, he is the one that gives me peace, saves me, and consoles me. Well, then, neither is it now difficult to understand what it means that he is the ***propitiation.*** He as the divine Saviour is ***that person who through his blood "propitiates sinners from their sins"*** (if we could use such an expression), that is, he propitiates sinners so that they get rid of their sins, he cleanses and sanctifies them from their sins. And this is indeed just what a sinner needs. O think how beautiful and comforting the reference of the apostle is, when he refers the one who sins to such a Saviour who really sanctifies and cleanses sinners from all sins — a really righteous and divine Saviour, who at the same time is a true and real man. Therefore, thou sorrowing and troubled soul, thou who hast sinned, and art distressed, and knowest not what to do, remember that Jesus is the propitiation, the great propitiatory sacrifice ***for the whole world,*** he whose blood cleanses from ***all*** sins. Go to him, and he

will help you out of your sin. Trust yourself wholly unto him. He will forgive you all, and cleanse you from all your wrong-doing.

70. The apostle uses the same manner of expression when he says in another place: ***"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son*** *to be* ***the propitiation for our sins"*** (1 John iv. 10). Mark the words again — word for word. Foremost the apostle puts love — not our love, but God's, — that love he puts at head of the atonement. There everything begins: "God is love" (verse 8). Who were they whom God loved? Answer: ***"us,"*** the apostle says; and by that little word he means himself and those to whom he wrote. Hence, his words in this passage have reference to ***believers.*** But that which he here says concerning them, is true also concerning ***the world,*** as we see from other passages, for instance John iii. 16: "God so loved the world." But what, then, did God do on account of this his love? Answer: "He sent his Son *to be* a propitiation as concerning our sins" [thus literally rendered], and "as concerning *the sins of* the whole world" (1 John ii. 2 [the last phrase of which verse, more correctly rendered, says simply: "as concerning the whole world"]). There you see, consequently, how the apostle speaks of God, not as one who ***for himself demands satisfaction,*** but as ***one who sacrifices his Son,*** in order that he may atone for, that is, blot out, our sins, and make good the injury which we have entailed upon ourselves and suffered through the fall.

71. Hence, also in the New Testament there is the same explanation of the sacrifices. And how could it be possible that God should contradict himself? Mark how everything in this matter aims at this: to eliminate or clear out from humanity that deadly poison — sin — which satan has injected into us, and to restore us unto God so thoroughly clean and holy as he originally had created us. And this through the blood of Christ, by making us

partakers of the life of Christ, as the apostle John says: "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7). The blood of Christ is a poison for sin. As sin has been for us a poison causing our death, so the blood of Christ is for sin a poison causing its death and our quickening in righteousness. O my soul, rest and breathe here. Take deep breaths of this heavenly air, for great is your God, and great are his works. Praise be to God for ever for his unspeakable gift.

CHAPTER V.

Man and the World as Objects of the Reconciliation, or the Atonement.

72. ***"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself"*** (2 Cor. v. 19). These words of the apostle do most briefly, yet very clearly and completely, set forth the very essence of the atonement, or the reconciliation. When we started to speak of the reconciliation [§§ 7 and 11], we raised the question if it was God or man or both parties, who was or were to be reconciled. Now we have searched through the Bible, and have found that it does not in a single place — either in the Old or the New Testament — speak of God as being reconciled. But if the Bible, the principal contents of which are all about reconciliation, never speaks of reconciling ***God,*** then neither ought we to speak thereof. For the apostle Peter says: "If any man speak, *let him speak* as the oracles of God" (1 Pet. iv. 11). The love of God had not been diminished through man's sin, so that it needed to be improved, increased or restored; nor could, by any means, God's hatred of sin be done away with, for if he did not hate sin, he would not be righteous; neither could God's displeasure to those who live in sin be done away with, because even yet, this very

day, God is displeased with all who live in sin. No change has taken place in him. He remains the same, the one he is; with him there is "no variableness, neither shadow of turning." He is the eternally faithful, unchangeable God, whose name is Jehovah (*i. e.* "I am that I am").

73. On the contrary, man needed to be reconciled to God. But before we proceed further to speak of this, we will here remark that the Bible has two different terms to express the idea of atonement, or reconciliation. One of these terms is used to express what is generally translated ***"atone for sin"*** [Swedish, "*försona synd*"] or ***"atone for sinners from*** (or, ***as to***) ***their sins"*** [Swedish, "*försona syndare från deras synder*"], that is, blot out sin, or cleanse and sanctify sinners from their sins.* Concerning this we have in the preceding two chapters spoken at large. The other term is used to express what is generally translated ***"reconcile sinners to God"*** [Swedish, "*försona syndare med Gud*"**]. The meaning of this word ("recon-

* The Swedish transitive verb "*försona*" takes as direct object either the person or the thing; when both kinds of objects are connected with the verb, the object of the thing is preceded by the preposition "*från*" (from), just as is the case with the English verb *cleanse* — *e. g.* cleanse any one *from* any thing. As to the corresponding Bible terms see my note to § 52. — *J. G. P.*

** It is to be noticed that the one Swedish word "*försona*" must be translated by different words in English: in expressions like the above first mentioned we must say "atone for sin," and "atone for sinners;" but in expressions like the second (*i. e.* the one to which this note is attached) we must say "reconcile sinners to God." A great deal of queer, mystifying English-American theology has been grounded on these different ways of expressing really the same thing. To "atone (or, make atonement) for sin" is, in biblical sense and language, to blot out or purge away sin; to "atone (or, make atonement) for sinners" is to purge or cleanse sinners morally and spiritually; — the one is really cleansing (or removing) sin from sinners, the other is cleansing sinners from their sins, and what more is done or can be done when sinners are *reconciled*, that is, changed from a state of mind in sin to a state of mind in holiness? Plainly, it is all the

cile") is, properly, ***to bring any one into a different, into a right, relation to any one.*** Just as when the first of these expressions is used, it is never said, "atone (or, make atonement) for God or for the wrath of God," so when the second of these expressions is used, it is never said, ***"reconcile God to sinners,"*** but always, ***"reconcile sinners to God."*** This we can also easily understand. God had never come into any wrong relation to men, and therefore he never needed to be brought again into a right relation to them. On the contrary, men had come into a wrong relation to God, and they therefore needed to be brought again into a right relation to him. On this depended their happiness, and their deliverance from all the suffering which their apostasy had caused.

74. Behold here an illustration. If an arm be wrested out of joint, and thereby comes into a wrong relation to the body, it becomes useless for the work for which it was created, and must suffer much pain. For it is so created that it ***cannot*** be well, neither can it accomplish its work, without being in a right relation to the body. If it is to be healed, and to be freed from pain, and fitted for its work, it must be brought again into a right relation to the body. This is not a change that is to take place in the body; no, but the change that must take place is a change in and with the arm. When it again comes into a right relation to the body, then it is fitted for its work and feels well. Behold, in a similar manner man has through sin come into a wrong relation to God, has thereby become incapacitated for all the good whereunto he was created, and has fallen under the dominion of death. Man has been so created that he ***cannot*** be happy without God. "In him we live, and move, and have our being," says the apostle (Acts xvii. 28). To be, in a spiritual sense, severed

same thing, the same work, and the same result, only viewed as to or under different aspects. More on these terms is said in my notes to §§ 1 and 51. — *J. G. P.*

from him is therefore death and unhappiness — a terrible unhappiness. If the sinner is to be saved at all, his salvation depends on his coming again into a right relation to the God who has given him his life. This is reconciliation, a necessary reconciliation, and the reconciliation of which the New Testament speaks: the reconciliation of ***man*** to God, not the reconciliation of God to man.

75. The Scriptures testify that man by nature, as estranged from God, is ***carnal.*** It is not the Spirit of God that fills and rules him, but the ***flesh,*** that is, the old inherited Adamic nature. But "the carnal mind" ["the mind of the flesh," according to the Rev. Vers.] "is enmity against God," says Paul (Rom. viii. 7). That is the chief trouble; not this or that transgression or misdeed; nay, but the very ***mind, the entire nature, as inherited from Adam, with all its quality, state, and condition,*** is enmity against God: "for it [*i. e.*, this mind] is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed ***can*** it be." Of the same thing the apostle speaks in Col. i. 21, where he says to the Christians: ***"Ye were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works."**** ***"The wicked*** [or ***evil***] ***works"*** of the ungodly are never isolated; they are expressions of ***the wicked, or evil, mind.*** And the evil mind is enmity against God. This the natural man will never admit. Even though he may admit that now and then in his life and in his works he may be at fault or be mistaken, still he will hold that ***in the depths of his heart*** he is good. But no, says the apostle, the natural mind itself in man is enmity against God. It is a terrible judgment which the apostle by these words pronounces upon all that bears the name of man (as he is by nature); but it is a ***true*** judgment.

* The last part of this verse is more literally and correctly rendered by the author (P. W.), according to the Greek: "enemies by [or, "through", or, "as to"] your mind in wicked works." — *J. G. P.*

76. Look at history as given in the Bible. As soon as Adam and Eve had transgressed against God they became alienated in heart from him, averse to him, and fled and hid themselves from him. This mind was transmitted as a spiritual inheritance to all their posterity. God has never done any evil or wrong to the world, nothing but good; but still the world does shun him, and flees away from him, not because he is averse to the world, but because the mind of the world is averse to him. Men of the world may, perhaps, read the word of God, make or say prayers, and sing, and outwardly revere God, ***but still there always remains a wall between them and God.*** They never feel joyful and happy in God, are never really at ease in his presence, but always feel most free and easy when they can slip away from him, and forget him. For that reason they also never really understand those who are happy in God, but regard them as extravagant and fanatical, and believe that their lives must be very empty of joy, etc. In short, the heart of the world is ***estranged*** from and ***dead*** to God, averse to him; and this makes it unblest. Here, as we have said, a reconciliation must take place, a reconciliation which brings man into an entirely different relation to God, if he is to become happy. But how, then, can such a reconciliation be brought about? Answer: By the removal of sin, and by the justification of man. ***That which separates must be removed.*** Otherwise there can be no reconciliation. But that which separates is sin. From this fact we understand why "the reconciliation of the sinner to God" always depends on "the atonement of the sins,"* that is, on the removal of the sins. We

* To show the force of the one Swedish word (*försona*) for both "reconciliation" and "atonement," the two expressions in the text above might be translated in this way: "'The atonement of the sinner unto God' always depends on 'the atonement of the sins.'" But at least the former of these expressions is not good English, usage of language having decreed that it must be: "the reconciliation of the sinner to God." And to use the word "recon-

repeat it again: By being cleansed from sin, the sinner comes into a right relation to God. In no other way can such a relation be brought about.

77. Now let us consider all the passages in the New Testament which speak of man's reconciliation to God.* And may God give us grace carefully to attend to the words, and to fix it firmly in our hearts that the spirit of the Bible is nothing but what the words of the Bible tell us. If we, in the judgment of some, should appear to fall into repetitions while we endeavor to set forth these matters, we answer with Paul: "To write the same things to you, to me *is* not grievous [Rev. Vers.: "irksome"], but for you *it is* safe" (Phil. iii. 1). And most certainly it gives the heart a wonderful sense of safety to see how the dear old word again and again and everywhere speaks and teaches the same thing. Now then, we will begin with 2 Cor. v. 17.

78. ***"If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."*** Thus saith the apostle. He and all the believers

ciliation" in the latter of the above expressions would be still less allowable, so as to say: "the reconciliation of sins." We must, therefore, in English, use the word "reconciliation" in the one instance, and "atonement" in the other,— as if the two words meant wholly different things, which in fact they do not, the only difference being in the objects, not in the acts or results themselves. See further the second note to § 73 — *J. G. P.*

* The expression, "to reconcile sinners to God," does not occur in the Old Testament. There occur the expressions, "atone for "*sins*," "atone for *sinners* from [or, as to] their sins," and the like, meaning the same as "blot out [or, cleanse away] sins," "cleanse sinners from their sins," etc. While, consequently, the Old Testament throughout considers the atonement, or the reconciliation, from the view of blotting out sin, the New Testament considers the same from the view of the sinner again coming into a right relation to God. The one takes place through and simultaneously with the other, but the latter says more than the former. The former is more negative, the latter more positive.

of his time were, consequently, new creatures, new men; their old manner of life in sin was ended, and a new mode of being had begun. Their entire relation to God, to the world, to sin, was different than before. And thus it was by their being ***"in Christ,"*** he says. "In Christ" is an expression constantly recurring in Paul's letters. All that the Christians are, all they possess, do, and expect, etc., all — all this the apostle refers to this center: Christ. Their peace, their life, their strength, their hope, their salvation — all depends on their being in Christ. But to be in Christ is to believe in him, for through faith the sinner yields himself to Christ, and becomes one with him. "But," the apostle adds, ***"all things** are **of God."*** It is he who is the source of all this blessed change. And in what way had God brought it about? Why, ***in this way*** — the apostle answers — ***that he has "reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ."*** There you hear: only by the way and means of reconciliation had this great salvation come to them, to wit, that ***they*** had become reconciled to God, and had thus come into a right relation to him. And who had brought this about? Answer: God, the heavenly Father. And by, or through, what means? Answer: By, or through, Jesus Christ. Just think how plain and simple. It was not Christ, who had reconciled God to them, but ***it was God,*** who had reconciled them to himself ***by*** and ***through*** Christ. Now this is clearly the teaching of the apostle in this place.

79. Suppose you had a friend who sinned against you, and thus became averse to you. Such things do, indeed, often happen among men. But suppose again that you still kept your good feelings towards him, and in some way finally succeeded in subduing him, so that he cordially returned to you, and all between you and him became right and good again. Then would it not be wrong to say that ***you*** had become reconciled to him? Certainly; on the contrary, it was you who had reconciled

him to yourself. And one who should say that ***you*** had been reconciled, and that your wrath had been appeased, he would do you a great injustice, and ***speak worse of you than you deserved.*** Would it not be so? Well, then, learn also from the words of Paul how you are to understand a man's reconciliation to God. When God saw us fallen, and averse to him, then he instituted ways and means to reconcile us to himself. For this purpose he gave his Son, and by this Son we (believers) have now been reconciled, says the apostle, and have become entirely new creatures. But he who, on the contrary, says that God has been reconciled, he speaks worse of God than he deserves.

80. But when Paul says, "hath reconciled ***us,"*** — whom does he really mean by "us"? Perhaps the whole world? By no means. Whom the apostle means by "us" he explains directly after, when he adds: ***"And hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation."*** Indeed this cannot be said of the whole world. Now, throughout this whole section of the epistle the apostle is speaking of his own position. "We are made manifest," he says, "unto God" and "in your consciences" (verse 11); "we are not again commending ourselves unto you" (verse 12, Rev. Vers.); if "we be beside ourselves, *it is* to God" (verse 13) "henceforth know we no man after the flesh" (verse 16), etc. Hence, by the words "we" and "us" he means ***himself.*** But beyond this plain literal reference of the words, they can be applied to all such persons as stand in the same relation to Christ as the apostle did. They are all reconciled to God by Christ.*

81. ***"Because"***** — thus the apostle proceeds —

* Incredibly great is the damage which has been done by and the confusion which has arisen from the belief that the apostles have meant *the world* when in their letters *to believers* they say "we", "us", "our", etc. When the apostles mean the world, then they say "the world".

** All the Swedish Versions, as also German, French and some others that I have seen, have here in the beginning of verse

"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." In verse 18 the apostle had said that that which had taken place in and with him was all of God. To this some one might object, saying: "It was not of God, but of Christ, that this took place." But "no, no," the apostle would answer; "it is all of God, because it was ***God*** who was in Christ, engaged in reconciling the world unto himself." In order better to understand the connection of the apostle's words, we will use an illustration. If I say, "That I exist is of God, because it is God who has created all things," then I explain my own existence as derived from God by the fact that it is God who has created all things, and therefore me also. Likewise the apostle says in effect: "That ***we*** are reconciled to God is a work of God, for it was he who was in Christ, reconciling the ***world."*** ***The entire work of reconciliation*** is of God, who dwelt and worked in Christ, therefore it is he who through Christ has reconciled to himself every man who is reconciled.

82. ***"The world,"*** says the apostle, — "reconciling the world." The work of Christ, or the work of God in Christ, did not limit itself to a certain few previously elected ones, but extended itself to the whole world. All sorrow which simple souls cause themselves on the question as to whether, perchance, they belong to the elect or to the non elect, is entirely needless, yea, really hurtful, and

19 a *causal* conjunction, — not as the English Authorized, and the Revised, which have *"to wit"*, erroneously making what follows explanatory to the immediately preceding expression, "the ministry of reconciliation." But even if the *"to wit"* and what follows could be, as it evidently should be, referred back to the expression in the beginning of verse 18 — "all things *are* of God" — verse 19 should not begin with "to wit," but with "because," "for," "inasmuch as," or the like, since plainly the apostle is giving in this verse the reason or ground for his preceding principal statement that "all things *are* of God."

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causes not only unrest and spiritual weakness, but sometimes even disorder of mind. Though from some passages in the Bible it might seem as if God had destined only certain ones to be saved, it is nevertheless always a false conception of such passages when they are interpreted or understood in evident conflict with the definite testimony of the Bible that the work of Christ holds good for ***all*** men. "God so loved the world," — thus it testifies — "that he gave his Son." The word "world" does not mean a certain part of mankind, but ***all*** mankind, ***all*** men, without any exception. God wills the death of ***no*** sinner. Consequently he has manifested himself in Christ for the purpose of reconciling ***all*** to himself. What he has predetermined is this, that whosoever believeth in the Son shall be saved. [See John iii. 15—17; xii. 47; 1 John iv. 14; Acts ii. 21; Rom. x. 11—13]. There has never been found on earth so bitter an enemy of God, that God would not reconcile him to himself. Neither will ever such an one be found hereafter.

83. This we ought not only to know as a good and true theological doctrine, but also be able to ***use*** it for the comfort and confirmation of ourselves and others. When sinners are awakened to a sense of their sins, it is, as we well know, very common for the devil so to terrify such souls, that they fear that God has given them over to a reprobate mind, so that it is impossible for them to be saved. "Too late! — too late!" — is the cry in their hearts. A confirmation of this they think they find in the fact that their pious endeavors (their self-righteous work!) have hitherto always been unsuccessful. They have resolved, they have wept and prayed and worked to make themselves better, and they have thought that, if they could have succeeded, God would have been gracious to them. But since they have never succeeded really to become better — to become such as they wished to be, that is, satisfied with themselves, — all their conflicts having ended in

overthrow or failure, — then they have begun to think this way, each for himself: "Now indeed it is clear that there is no hope for me. God has in anger shut up his tender mercies; to me he will be favourable no more." (*Cf.* Ps. LXXVII. 7—9). Thus and more in the same strain thinks the distressed, wearied soul. At certain times it may happen that even those who long have lived in the faith of Jesus get into such darkness that they fear that God has altogether forsaken them. This we can see from the experiences of the saints as recorded in the Bible. Well, then, in the case of either the sinner or the saint, such passages as the one before us will be of right good service — to wit, such passages as those in which God says that his work in Christ pertains to ***all*** men, to the ***whole world.*** When every thing is light and joyous for the heart, then they may be or seem to be of less use, because then their teaching this appears so clearly. But when darkness comes on, then we realize their value. And if any one who reads this is now in such darkness, we would gladly shout these words, "the world", into the depths of his heart. Even though you may say, "I am the worst, the guiltiest, the most wretched person, that ever lived in the world," still you can never say, "I am so guilty and bad that I do not any more belong to the world." Nay, wherever you may go or whatever you may be, you certainly still belong to the world; and of ***the world*** Paul says: "God was in Christ, reconciling ***the world*** unto himself." You may be an apostate, or a backslider; if so, ***then you have fallen back into the world,*** and it was for the reconciliation of the world that God was manifested in Christ. Now, since God thus speaks, you ought to hearken to that word, and believe it, to the glory of God, and to your own comfort.

84. ***"In Christ,"*** says the apostle. God's entire work of salvation is, so to speak, comprehended in Christ. God has, indeed, also in other ways manifested himself. He has manifested himself in nature; he has specially

manifested himself in the prophets, in the apostles, etc. But the Bible never says that God was in nature, or in the prophets, or in the apostles, reconciling the world. No; but in Christ — only in Christ, — he alone is the Mediator. It was already the Spirit of Christ that was in and worked in the prophets (1 Pet. i. 11). It was Christ who was in and worked in the apostles. It is Christ who is still, even to-day, working in and through the word, baptism, the Lord's supper, etc., for the reconciliation of sinners to God. In him God is summing up all things (Eph. i. 10, Rev. Vers.); in him all fulness of the Godhead dwells, and by or in him God has created all things (Col. i. 16, 19); in him and in none other, therefore, is there salvation (Acts iv. 12). No one can come to God, or be reconciled to God, but by him. Such is the testimony of the Scriptures in the most unambiguous terms.

85. But seeing it was God who was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, you can in Christ see also a truly beautiful and lovely image of God. All, all the work of Christ — by his words as well as by his deeds — was directed towards the restoration of sinners from their sins, and towards bringing them back to God. You will never find, either in his words or in his works, a single thing wherein this does not plainly appear. Never will you find a single instance where he in any way seeks compensation or satisfaction for himself; but his entire life and work are given to sinners, in order to seek and save them, to arouse them to a consideration of their needs, to blot out their sins, to subdue their enmity, and to bring them again into a right and good relation to God. With this his heart was aglow, in spite of all their own bitter opposition. Well, then, consider now that it is ***God,*** the heavenly Father, you thus see in Christ, that it is he who does and works all this in Christ, for it is he who is in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself. Oh! how dear and precious to your heart you will find God to be when you

thus behold him in Christ. Because in Christ you have the true manifestation of him.

86. But as the apostle says, "God was in Christ, ***reconciling the world*** unto himself," the question arises, if the matter itself of which the apostle speaks is to be understood as being just this, that the whole world is now once for all reconciled unto God, or if the reconciliation is to be regarded as ***a work of God still going on.*** This is a very important question — is it not? May God guide us in his truth as we look into the Bible to find its answer.

87. Is the world reconciled to God? We answer in the first place: ***Thus God nowhere speaks in his word.*** What I see in the Bible on that subject is this, that the work of God in Christ was to reconcile the world, that the whole ***purpose*** of Christ's coming into the world, of his preaching, of his sufferings, death, resurrection, etc., was to reconcile the world unto God. But by this it is yet not said that the world now ***is*** reconciled.* If any one says

* It is deeply to be regretted that the Lectors' Version of the New Testament [which Version, thus called, was made by certain learned men, "*lectors*", or professors, in a couple of higher institutions of learning at Stockholm, and published, first time in 1863, by the Evangelical Native-Land Association (*Evangeliska Fosterlands-Stiftelsen*, a Swedish home and foreign missionary association)], — a Version, on the whole so excellent and meritorious, generally faithfully following the original text, — does however in certain points, as for instance just here in 2 Cor. v. 19, altogether depart from the original, in order, self-authoritatively, to put in something which Paul neither here nor anywhere else has written. [The Author (P. W.) wrote this before Sept. 1881, as it was published then. In the previous editions of the Version referred to, the expression in question reads (being translated): "*For God reconciled in Christ the world unto himself.*" Thus, alas! also the now authorized new Swedish Version renders the sentence. The tenth edition of the above-mentioned Version ("the Lectors' Version"), published in 1882, and every edition since, has a foot-note to that rendering, which note reads thus: "Or, *For God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself.*" P. W. has since very truly said that that note ought to

that the object of Christ's work was to make the world ***happy,*** and to ***bring it to heaven,*** then that is saying the truth. But if from this the inference be made, that the world now ***is*** happy and ***is*** in heaven, it would be utterly erroneous. "Well, but," you say, "Christ did however cry on the cross, ***"It is finished,"*** and what was then finished, if not his work of reconciliation?" Answer: ***All that Christ, according to the prophecies, should fulfill here upon earth for the salvation of the world was then finished.*** That this was the meaning of his cry we can see from the context. For thus it reads: ***"That the Scripture might be fulfilled*** Jesus saith, 'I thirst'." Then they gave him vinegar, and when he had received the vinegar he said, ***"It is finished"*** (John xix. 28—30). Consequently, all that was written concerning him was now accomplished. But by this it is yet not at all said that the world ***is*** reconciled, saved, happy, etc. No; here it is not advisable to go beyond the plain words of Scripture. To say that the world is reconciled is just as foreign to the Bible as to say that it is saved and happy in God. There is not a single passage in the whole Bible where either the one or the other of such things is written. "God ***willeth*** that all men [*i. e.* the the world] ***should be saved"*** — that is written (1 Tim. ii. 4, Rev. Vers.). When God sent his Son into the world, he did so with ***this object in view,*** that the world should be saved. Christ came, "finished the work which God had given him to do" on earth (John xvii. 4), suffered, died, and rose from the dead, all ***in order to*** save the world; but nevertheless the world ***is*** not yet saved. This we all understand very well; but precisely the same that holds true of the ***salvation*** of the world, holds true also of the ***reconciliation*** of the world.

be raised to the dignity of text, while the translation in the text ought to be removed entirely. These observations on that particular Swedish Version hold good also with reference to similar translations in other languages. — *J. G. P.*]

88. But not only this. The apostle has in our text a word which at once and expressly shows that the world is not reconciled. "God," he says, "was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses, and having committed unto us the word of reconciliation. ***Therefore we beseech*** *you* ***on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God."**** As he beseeches the world to be reconciled to God, it proves that it ***is*** not reconciled. Let us here look at an example, or perhaps two examples. When Peter in Acts ii. 40 says to the Jews, ***"Save yourselves*** from this crooked generation," then by these very words he announces that ***they were not*** saved. When he in Acts iii. 19 exhorts them, saying, ***"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out,"*** then again by these very words he announces that ***they were not*** converted, and that their sins ***were not*** blotted out. Likewise here, when Paul says to the world, "be ye reconciled to God," then by these very words this apostle announces that the world ***is not*** reconciled. Nothing can be clearer than this.

89. But now some one may say: "The apostle is here speaking of a twofold reconciliation, one general, which has been made for the whole world, and one individual, which consists in this, that every individual person for and to himself appropriates or accepts the general reconciliation."** Many of God's dear and upright children

* Thus the parts of the verses referred to are rendered in the Revised Version, which here fully agrees with the Author's (P. W.'s) translation in Swedish. — *J. G. P.*

** What in the above statement of the view in question is called "the general reconciliation," is just what by many English and American religious writers is called "the atonement", "the purchased redemption", or "the finished work of Christ", — also other terms or expressions are used for the same idea. The term "reconciliation" alone is applied by such writers to what above is called "individual reconciliation." In Scandinavian and German religious literature this "twofold" reconciliation is ex-

hold such a view, and will here surely put it forward as an objection to what we have said before on this point. But this view, or objection, rests upon a great misapprehension. Neither Paul nor any other apostle speaks anywhere about any such twofold reconciliation. And that Paul does not so speak, especially in the text which we are considering, he himself makes apparent by his using the very same word in all the cases where he speaks of reconciliation. See here another example. If I say, "God was in Christ, ***saving the world,*** therefore we beseech you on his behalf, ***be ye saved,"*** then by this nothing at all would be said of a twofold salvation. Everyone would by this understand that I besought the world to be saved, not on the ground that the world was saved, but on the ground that God had manifested himself in Christ ***for the purpose of*** saving the world. The relation between the different expressions is the same here. When the apostle says, "God was in Christ, ***reconciling the world*** unto himself, therefore we beseech you, ***be ye reconciled*** [or, ***allow yourselves to be reconciled***] ***to God,"*** then he speaks about one and the same reconciliation. On the ground that God was in Christ manifested ***for the purpose of*** reconciling them, he beseeches them ***to be*** reconciled (that is, to allow themselves to be reconciled). The Scriptures do not know of any reconciliation which consists in anything else than in this, ***that the individual sinners be reconciled to God.*** In reality the apostle says as much as this: "It was God, who was in Christ, and his work in Christ was to reconcile the world unto himself. ***We*** have been (that is, we have allowed ourselves to be) reconciled to

pressed also by such terms as "the objective and the subjective reconciliation" (or atonement) — on which more is said further on (see note to § 109). In English religious literature the two different, yet synonymous, words ("atonement" and "reconciliation") have simplified the distinction, but at the same time carried it farther from the truth. — *J. G. P.*

him, and have from him received the ministry of reconciliation, through which we now cry to ***the world,*** that is, to all men: 'Be ye reconciled'." Thus it was in the case of the apostles, and in their days. In the same way it will continue unto the end of days. Every man who has been reconciled to God, has been reconciled by God. It is the work of ***God — through*** Christ. And the reconciled man also, in his turn, is ordained to beseech others: "Be ye reconciled unto God" And this, because the reconciling work of God in Christ aimed at ***the reconciliation of the whole world*** unto God, just as the apostle here says.

90. We will understand this still more clearly if we consider what we have before said of the proper meaning of the word which the apostle here uses, and which in our Bible is translated by the word "reconcile." It properly means, "to bring some one into another relation, that is, into a right relation, to some one else." To be reconciled to God means, therefore, to be in, or stand in, a ***right relation to God.*** But the world is not in such a relation. And that it does not stand in a right relation to God the word of God as well as all experience shows. What the apostle Paul says in Rom. i., that is still true of the world: that it is filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, covetousness, envy, murder, strife, deceit, etc.; but they who are such do not stand in a right relation to God. Consequently, what is necessary for man, if he is to be saved, is that he be ***again brought,*** or ***set,*** into a right relation to God. And it was this that God had in view when he sent his Son. Therefore, also, the gospel is now calling to the whole world: "Be ye reconciled to God," that is, suffer yourselves now to be brought into a right relation to God, suffer yourselves to be reconciled to him. Moreover, wherever the gospel is preached we see many and again many who really become reconciled to God, and thus come into a right relation to him. And this always

happens by their coming to Christ, to whom the gospel attracts them, and in whom God dwells. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself."

91. Let us here employ an illustration which Christ himself has used. When God by Moses lifted up the brazen serpent in the wilderness, then it was done ***for the healing of all who were bitten by the serpents.*** But, simply for that reason, or only with that object in view, no one could indeed have said as soon as the serpent had been lifted up: "Now all who have been bitten by the serpents are at once, and once for all, healed in and through this brazen serpent; therefore, now every one individually must for himself, by looking at the brazen serpent, appropriate to himself this healing and thus become well." No; but rather did the announcement to the people (Num. xxi. 8) say as much as this: "This serpent of brass is lifted up for the healing of all; therefore we beseech you on behalf of God, ***be ye healed*** — that is, allow yourselves to be healed, or, be ye willing to be healed — by looking upon it." Was there at all any question of a twofold healing? No, indeed. Well, now it is just the same in this matter of reconciliation. Not that we can say: "In Christ all sinners are now once for all reconciled to God; this reconciliation they must now individually, each one for himself, appropriate by faith." Nay, nay; but thus we truly can say: "Christ is given by God ***to be the Saviour of the whole world*** (1 John iv. 14); he has died, has been buried, has risen from the dead, etc. — all, all, ***in order that he may reconcile*** the world to God; therefore come, all ye sinners, and be reconciled to God by surrendering yourselves to him. The true Physician is here at hand, in order to heal all the sick; therefore, ye sick ones, be ye healed, be ye willing, allow yourselves, to be healed by believing in him, etc."

92. "But yet," says some one again, "in Rom. v. 10 it does stand, 'When we were enemies, we were recon-

ciled to God by the death of his Son,' and this shows indeed — does it not? — that we were reconciled to God on the day when Christ died, and hence long before any of our believing, or before our conversion, yes, even long before we were born into the world." Well, of this we will speak in our next chapter. May God guide us in the light of his eternal truth. "The testimony of the Lord *is* sure, making wise the simple." (Ps. xix. 7).

CHAPTER VI.

Objects of the Reconciliation, or Atonement, continued, with Special Reference to the Time, Manner, and Means thereof, or, When and How Man is Reconciled to God.

93. ***"When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son"*** (Rom. v. 10). The question was raised at the close of the preceding chapter, if these words do not prove that the whole world, apart from all consideration of and every condition as to faith and repentance, was reconciled to God on the day when Christ died. And we promised to examine this point more closely in this chapter. In order rightly to understand the meaning of the apostle, we must pause at and carefully consider every word of what he here says. First, we notice the ***"we"*** of the apostle in the text. Who are then the ***"we"*** of whom he speaks? He himself shows whom he means when he goes on to say: "For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by [or, in] his life; and not only so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ."* Concerning the same

* Thus the Revised Version, which is here more like the Author's (P. W.'s) own translation of the passage into Swedish. — *J. G. P.*

"we" he had previously written thus: "We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (verse 1); "we rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (verse 2); "we glory in tribulation also" (verse 3); "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" (verse 5). Who, now, are these ***"we"?*** Are they the world? Can it be said of the world, that it has peace with God? that it has the Holy Ghost? that the love of God is shed abroad in its heart? that it shall be saved in the life of Christ? that it rejoices in God through the Lord Jesus Christ? Of course not. The apostle speaks of himself and believers, not of the world. Therefore he says just as he means — "we," and not "the world": ***"We*** were reconciled to God by the death of his Son"; and then, "much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by [or, in] his life."

94. ***"By the death of his Son,"*** that is, of ***Christ,*** — that is the next expression of the apostle which we notice. Does not this mean, "the day when Christ died"? Answer: It is not thus written. Neither does the apostle ever say in any other place that we were reconciled to God on the day when Jesus died. ***"By the death of Jesus"*** is never the same as ***"on the day when Jesus died."*** All who now are justified and righteous, the living and happy children of God, have become such by, or through, the death of Jesus; but this does not at all mean that they became such on the day when Jesus died. The apostle Peter, also, says to the Christians that they had been "begotten again unto a lively [*i. e.*, a living] hope ***by*** the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1 Pet. i. 3); but this does not mean that they, without faith and repentance, had been born again ***on the day when Christ arose from the dead.*** Hence, when Paul says, "by the death of Jesus," then he expresses — just as the words read — ***the means,*** but not the ***time,*** of their reconciliation, — ***how,*** not ***when,*** they were reconciled. And that means operates

continually, through the ages, to effect the reconciliation of sinners to God.

95. ***"When we were enemies"*** [***"While*** we were enemies," Rev. Ver.], or, literally, ***"Being enemies,"*** — the apostle says — ***"we were reconciled to God."*** Does not this expression prove our reconciliation to have taken place prior to any our conversion or faith, since it took place while we yet were enemies? Answer: By no means. The apostle does not in his language really say, "We ***were*** reconciled," etc., but "we ***became*** reconciled to God at the time when we were enemies."* Hence, that is saying this much: "We were ***enemies*** at that time, but we ***became*** reconciled, and this was effected by Christ's giving his life

* As the English verb *"to be"* is used both as an auxiliary to form the passive of transitive verbs, and also as a predicate verb, by some grammarians called *copula*, the distinction between the two different Swedish verbs here used by the Author — *vara* and *varda*, exactly like the German *sein* and *werden* — cannot well be expressed by exact corresponding words in English. The Author would certainly not like to lay himself open to the charge of making hair-splitting distinctions. The predicate in the sentence, "we were reconciled," etc., would in English hardly be understood otherwise than as a passive verb in the past tense. But in Swedish, with *"voro"* (past of *"vara," to be*) as a predicate-verb, or copula, and *"försonade,"* "reconciled," as a complement in the nature of a predicate-adjective, the meaning would be: "At the time when we were enemies, *i. e.*, unconverted, we were already then reconciled, *i. e.*, we were in a reconciled state, or condition, effected by the death of Christ," — which would mean that at one and the same time we were both enemies to God and also friends (= reconciled) to him, — a doctrine, usually called "the objective reconciliation" (or atonement), really held by some people. This the apostle cannot mean, since he uses the passive *katellagemen*, which in Swedish is expressed by *"vordo försonade"*. Corresponding forms of *"blifva"* ("become," "get") are frequently used instead of *"varda,"* as being stronger than this simple passive auxiliary. In English the passive is, "were reconciled;" but in cases of doubt or ambiguity the stronger verb *"became"* would be used instead of *"were"*. In popular (vulgar?) phrase it would be said, *"got* reconciled." — *J. G. P.*

for us." The apostle does not say that we continued to be enemies after we had been reconciled. No; rather this does he say: "That God so loved us, that he spared not his only begotten Son, but delivered him up, even unto death, for our salvation, — this was the great and unspeakable grace that reconciled us to God, brought us into a different, yea, into a right relation to him, and ***made us his friends, who before had been his enemies.***" He does not say that God was made our friend, because he had never been our enemy; no, but we, we who were enemies, we were, or became, reconciled to God. Just think what an enemy Paul himself had been. But he had been reconciled to God. When and where? On the way to Damascus, at the very time when he was raging the worst in his enmity. And by what means had he been reconciled to God? By Jesus, having given his life for him, — that self-same Jesus whom he was persecuting.

96. In order more easily to understand this point, we will again make use of an illustration. If one who has been a drunkard says, "God had compassion on me, and regenerated me while, or at the time when, I still was in the degradation of drunkenness, and was an enemy to him," — now, would he by this mean that, before and without any his repentance and faith, he was a regenerated man while and at the same time as he was continuing in drunkenness? Certainly not. But this he means to say, that he ***was*** a drunkard, but at that time he was ***born again*** [***"became*** regenerated" — to use the manner of expression spoken of before as clearer, stronger, and not liable to be ambiguous], ***and thus ceased to be a drunkard.*** And lo, in the same manner the believers at Rome (as also all other believers) ***had been*** enemies to God, had lived without God, yea, had despised him, and had walked in and had had their pleasure in all kinds of sin. But ***now*** they were reconciled* to God, and this had taken place by the

* Notice this expression, as illustrating what is said in the

death of his Son. Now they were enemies to him no longer. Now they were standing in a right and good relation to God. The believers of all ages can give the same testimony. Just think of yourself. ***Were*** you not an enemy to God? And did you not then ***become*** reconciled, so that you ceased to be his enemy, and instead became his friend? Why, certainly. And by what means? Just by Christ's having entered into death for you, which fact you learned from the gospel. Well, then you yourself have experienced what the apostle here is saying. What the apostle says he does not seize out of the wind, or merely fancy it; but he gathers it from such living realities as he and all believers then had experienced, and as others since, in all ages, have experienced.

97. But we need not rely on illustrations. The apostle himself explains what kind of reconciliation he means. In verses 8 and 9 he says: ***"While we were yet sinners,*** Christ died for us; much more then, ***being now justified*** by [or, in] his blood, we shall be saved from the wrath through him. For," he adds in verse 10, "if we, ***being enemies,*** were [or, became] reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more shall we, ***being reconciled,*** be saved in his life."* Note this connection: ***Formerly we were sinners,*** and then Christ died for us; ***now we are*** not sinners any more, but ***righteous,*** and therefore we shall be saved through him from the wrath to come. ***Formerly we were enemies,*** and then we became reconciled through

preceding note. Here *"were reconciled"* is logically not in the passive voice, which would give the sense that they now, just at that time, became reconciled; but this is not what the Author here wants to say. But "were" is here the predicate-verb (or copula), and "reconciled" is the complement with the force of an adjective, giving the meaning, "Now they were in a reconciled state, or condition," which is saying as much as and even more than, "Now they had been reconciled." — *J. G. P.*

* Verse 10 (of Rom. v.) thus literally rendered and constructed, following the Author's (P. W.'s) Swedish. — *J. G. P.*

his death; ***now we are not enemies*** any longer, but ***are reconciled,*** and therefore ***friends,*** hence we shall much more be saved in his life. Consequently, Paul here ***puts in opposition*** the two conditions: to be an ***enemy*** and to be ***reconciled.*** He who is an enemy is not reconciled; he who is reconciled is not an enemy. Hence, to be reconciled is the same as ***to have become*** a friend after ***having been*** an enemy. Over against this the apostle ***puts together,*** on the one hand, ***sinner*** and ***enemy,*** and, on the other hand, to be ***justified*** and to be ***reconciled.*** To ***be a sinner,*** or to be in sin, is to be an ***enemy;*** to be ***justified from sin*** is to be reconciled and brought into a right relation to God. Just think what a glorious connection. By falling into sin man has come into a wrong relation to God, has become his enemy; by being [*i. e.*, becoming] justified from sin man comes into a right relation to him, is reconciled to him. Now, compare with this the sacrifices of the Old Testament, and you will see how the same beautiful line of scarlet thread runs through both the Old and the New Testament. Because, as we have already seen, the sacrifices were designed, in a typical way, to blot out sins, and thus to cleanse and sanctify sinners from their sins, which is just the way to bring them again into a right relation to God, that is, to reconcile them to him, — just as Paul here teaches. Praise be to God for his unspeakable gift and grace.

98. Hence, the principal lessons to be gathered from Rom. v. 10, regarding the reconciliation, may be most briefly summed up as follows: (1.) all men are by nature enemies of God, because they are carnally minded; (2.) the entire work of God in reconciliation does therefore tend to this, that he may by it reconcile enemies to himself; (3.) consequently, all who have ever become reconciled have become so as enemies, that is, at the time when they were enemies, or in a state and condition of enmity to God. But we will proceed further, in order to

see how the apostle in other places speaks of the reconciliation.

99. In Ephesians ii. 14—16 the apostle says:* ***"Christ is our peace, who has made both*** [*i. e.*, peoples, Jews and Gentiles] ***one, and has taken away the partition wall of separation*** [*i. e.*, the wall which was designed to keep us, Jews and Gentiles, apart, and which actually did, in heart and mind, separate us], *to wit*, ***the enmity, having in his flesh annulled the law of commandments in ordinances; in order that he might in himself create of the two*** [men, or kinds of men, Jews and Gentiles] ***one new man, making peace, and reconcile them both in one body unto God through the cross, having slain the enmity in himself."*** Here the apostle is speaking again of the reconciliation of sinners to God. He has in the nearest preceding verses shown how the Christians at Ephesus had been Gentiles, separate from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers from the covenants of the promise, and far from God, but how they now in Christ were brought nigh in the blood of Christ. They had now — they too — become the people of God, although by nature they were Gentiles. "For," the apostle then adds, "he, Christ, is our peace." As much as to say: "The former state of enmity, which existed between the Jews and the Gentiles, had its foundation in the ordinances, or statutes, of the Old Testament, which formed a kind of separating partition wall. But this state has now ceased, and you Gentiles are now partakers of the same grace as we Jews, for Christ has made an end of the entire Old Covenant with its ordinances; and this he has done, in order that he might make Jews and Gentiles to be one with each other, and create them as one new man in himself." By the Gentile's being in Christ he has ceased to be a Gentile, and by the Jew's being in Christ he has ceased to be a Jew.

* I translate quite literally the Author's own rendering in the text. — *J. G. P.*

Both of them have become something else, something new; namely, they have become ***Christians,*** and are now ***one*** in Christ. ***"And,"*** the apostle adds, "Christ has done this, further, in order ***that he might reconcile them both in one body unto God through the cross."*** There he presents, as the great principal aim of the work of Christ, the reconciliation of all to God — the reconciliation both of the Jews and of the Gentiles. But that they are to be reconciled to God "in one body," this means ***that they were regarded and are to be regarded simply as one people*** [*e. i.*, as constituting one mass of humanity, all alike having need of and being objects of the same reconciliation], ***and as such are to be brought into a right relation to God.*** The means for doing this is the ***cross,*** as the apostle says, that is, the fact that Christ has sacrificed his life on the cross for both Jews and Gentiles. It is this great act of salvation, which, on the one hand, is to "slay the enmity" between Jew and Gentile, and, on the other hand, is to "reconcile them both to God."

100. In Colossians i. 19 and 20 the apostle says: ***"For it has pleased God that all the fulness should dwell in him*** [Christ], ***and that he should through him reconcile all things into himself, making peace through the blood of his cross; through him*** *reconcile all things* ***whether upon the earth or in the heavens."**** As we see, the apostle is also in this passage speaking of reconciliation to God, and his words go much further than in the former passage. In the first place, he sets forth our whole salvation, or reconciliation, as grounded, ultimately, in the good pleasure of God. It did not please God to deal with us according to our sins, to cast us off and destroy us, but it ***pleased*** him, on the contrary, to sacrifice everything, in order to reconcile us to himself. It passes all human understanding, that God is so good; but what is now to be done about it? Such

* The verses are here translated in accordance with the Author's Swedish rendering in the text. — *J. G. P.*

was the good pleasure of God, and there it stands; you cannot get around it. If the devil contradicts it, if my own feelings rise up against it and try to picture God differently — well, what of that? The devil is a liar, and my own feelings are erratic. But the word of the Lord abideth forever. All that our heart feels and thinks in opposition to this word only testifies how far, by nature, our heart has got from the true knowledge of God. Consequently, it ***pleased*** God to reconcile us to himself. It was we that needed to be reconciled to him, and it was he that took measures to accomplish it.

101. Secondly, the apostle teaches us here that for this reason it has pleased God that in Christ all the fulness should dwell. By this fulness the apostle means the entire fulness, abundance and riches, of devine grace. Of the same thing John the evangelist speaks when he says: "We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, ***full of grace and truth"*** (Joh. i. 14, 16). Hence, in order that he might reconcile us to himself, it pleased God to let the full riches of all — not a part, but of ***all*** — his grace dwell in Christ. A lesser person than the only begotten Son was not sufficient for the great work; and with anything less than all the fulness of God's grace it could not be accomplished. Therefore it pleased God to send just him, and fill him with all this fulness. Hence it happens that Christ everywhere in the Gospels ascribes to the Father all that he is and does and speaks. Hence, also, it happens that he says: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father;" "He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him [*i. e.*, the Father] that sent me," etc. It was, then, all the fulness, all the abundance, of all the grace of the Father, which dwelt in him and worked in him for the reconciliation of sinners to God. And if the ultimate motive for all this be sought, it is to be found in God — in the good pleasure of God. "God is love" — there the whole history of our salvation begins.

102. Further, the apostle gives us, by his very mode of expression, a good understanding of what he means by the word "reconcile". For he says that it was God's good pleasure "to reconcile all things unto [literally, ***"into"***] himself." Thus, he here uses a different expression than elsewhere used. In other places he says, literally, "reconcile ***with*** God"; here, however, "reconcile ***into*** God."* But what is it to reconcile anyone into God? Answer: ***It is to bring such a one into a right and good relation to God,*** and just in this consists the essence of reconciliation. This the apostle plainly expresses when for the sake of explanation he adds: ***"Making peace through the blood of his cross."*** To bring sinners ***into*** a true ***relation of peace*** with God is, therefore, "to reconcile into God." But who is it that is here held up as "making peace" and as "reconciling all things to himself"? Answer: ***It is God himself.*** And through what means? Answer: Through the blood of Jesus. There was no need of making peace in God [that is, in the heart and mind of God, — no need of making him peaceably disposed], because there was no enmity in him. But in us was enmity, therefore ***we***

* In the following N. T. passages the verb "reconcile" is (in Greek) connected with a *dative*, hence without a preposition: Mat v. 24; Rom v. 10; 2 Cor. v. 18 and 19; Eph ii 16. This construction is in Swedish uniformly rendered by *"med"* ("with", like the German *"mit"*) — "reconcile anyone *with* anyone." But in English "to" or "unto" is used. The passage (Col. i. 20) under consideration in the text above is in Greek quite peculiar: having the verb "reconcile" connected with a preposition (*eis*, into) followed by an accusative. This is expressed in Swedish by the prep. *"till"* (German *"zu"*), but the English will not admit of any other preposition than "to" or "unto", which is quite proper here where there is an underlying idea of spiritual or mental motion *to, toward,* or *into connection with,* God. As *"to"* has also the weaker sense of a dative connective — uniting the remoter object with the verb — it becomes, in fact, aquivalent also to the Greek dative and the Swedish prep. "med" (German "mit"). — *J. G. P.*

needed to be brought, through the blood, into a relation of peace with God — made peaceably disposed toward him. And to do this, that was the work of ***God.*** For the accomplishment of this work it pleased him to have all the fulness of his grace dwell in Christ, and to send him into humiliation, suffering, and death. For he so loved the world. Oh, what a God! All — "all things *are* of God," we have already heard the apostle say in 2 Cor. v. 18, — all is of God through Christ. ***God is the source, the author; Christ is the mediator; and the blood is the means.***

103. But the meaning becomes still clearer when the apostle in v. 21 *et seq.* (of Col. i.) adds: ***"And you, being in time past alienated and enemies in your mind in your evil works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and without blemish and unreproveable before him: if so be that ye continue in the faith, grounded and stedfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel."*** — After the apostle had set forth the great ***main object*** in the sending of Christ — to wit, to reconcile the world to God — he goes on to say that this object was realized in the case of the believers to whom he was writing, inasmuch as they had been [had become] reconciled to God. The apostle is speaking here just as he does in 2 Cor. v.: to wit, he first presents the object of God's work in Christ as being the reconciliation of ***the whole world,*** and then shows that this object is attained according as men ***become reconciled,*** or allow themselves to be reconciled. And to those who had thus become reconciled the believers in Colosse now belonged. But he who had reconciled them ***was God,*** as he says: "And* you hath

* The Author (P. W.), as does also the now authorized Swedish new Version, translates the apostle's "*kai*" by "even", or "also," which seems more forceable in contradistinction to the "all things" in the beginning of verse 20. The translation of the verses, as quoted above, is from the Revised Version (English). — *J. G. P.*

he (God) now reconciled." But what the apostle meant by this, that they now were reconciled, we can see from his expressions about the opposite state; he says: ***"Ye were in time past alienated and enemies in*** [or, ***by***] ***your mind in your evil works, yet*** [or, ***but***] ***now hath he*** (God) ***reconciled you."*** Not to be reconciled is therefore the same as to be alienated from God, to have one's affections withdrawn from him, and to be in heart and mind an enemy to him; and such the Colossians had been ***in time past,*** as was then manifested by the evil works, or doings, in which they were engaged. On the other hand, to be reconciled is to have come nigh unto God, to stand in a right relation to him, and to be his friend; and such the Colossians were ***now*** since they had learned to know Jesus, and had been united to him. Hence, according to the teaching of Paul in this passage, the reconciliation of a sinner to God consists in this, that from having lived in sin and having been an enemy of God he becomes righteous and enters into a true relation of peace with God. Nothing can be clearer and more simple than this connection of the apostle's words. But as to the means he says: ***"Through death"*** — "God has reconciled you in the body of Christ's flesh through death," that is, by his having given into death for you the body of his only begotten Son. This great fact, of which they had received knowledge through the gospel, was that which had drawn their hearts to God, had wholly conquered their enmity, and had made them the children and the friends of God. And then the apostle adds, in effect, that if they continued in the faith, they could expect sometime to stand holy and perfect before God in heaven — all through the work of the same God, and through the same Mediator, Jesus.

104. But the apostle has yet in this text a word that is calculated to shed a most wonderful light on the mystery of the reconciliation. He says, namely, that God would reconcile to himself not only that which is on the earth,

that is, humanity, mankind, the world of man, ***but also that which is in the heavens,*** that is, the angelic host, the world of angels. That, now, in his expression about the angelic world, he does not include the ***evil*** angels, we understand at once from his words, "in the heavens." The evil spirit world is not in the heavens. Hence, what God was concerned to do in Christ, was to reconcile ***also the heavenly angel world*** unto himself. But what does this mean, that God would reconcile the good angels? Well, we understand, first of all, without even saying it, that it does not mean that God would appease his wrath against the good angels. Why, what an altogether unbiblical doctrine that would be! But what, then, does it mean? Answer: It means just what the words say, to wit, that God would in Christ bring into a right relation to himself not only the world of human beings, but also the heavenly world of angels. In Eph. ii. the apostle has spoken of the Jews and Gentiles, who had been separated from one another, as united in one, and reconciled to God. Here he ascends higher, and speaks of men and angels, who had been separated from one another, as reunited into an harmonious whole, and thus reconciled to God.

105. But are the angels sinful? or have they in any other way come into a wrong relation to God? Answer: The angels are not sinful, but through man's sin a disturbance has been occasioned even in ***their*** relation to God. Originally the world of humanity and the world of angels belonged together as one whole where the perfect happiness, in God, of the one was not possible but in connection with that of the other. Together they formed, so to speak, one body with many members. Therefore, the fall of man had an influence not only on his own relation to God, but also on the relation of the entire spirit world, which thus was disturbed. Behold here an illustration. When an important member of the body is badly hurt, then all the other members of that body feel it.

None of these other members can then feel perfectly well. Through the injured member they all suffer more or less hinderance, although each one by itself is not hurt. Therefore they are all concerned that the sick member be healed. Something similar happened when man fell into sin. The fall had a hindering and disturbing effect, not only upon man himself, and not only upon that nature which surrounded him the nearest and which was stricken with a curse, but also upon the entire heavenly spirit world. Hence, in the cause of man's restoration, not only his own recovery is concerned, nor is it a matter that concerns only the removal of the curse under which ***the earth*** is sighing on account of man's sin, but that cause comprehends also the removal from yonder world of heavenly spirits and from its relation to God every disturbing element and condition, the existence of which was caused by the fall. Wherein this disturbance really consists it is not possible for us to know, but ***that*** a disturbance has been occasioned we can understand, and the apostle teaches it here. When, therefore, the heavenly spirits are so earnestly concerned about man's salvation, they are concerned about a matter that touches also their own position, their own complete happiness, which has been obstructed by the dislocation of a member in the great body to which they belonged. Just think what a wonderful look the apostle permits us, by these his words, to cast into the mysteries of the spirit world. But still more: just think what an insight he gives us into the mysteries of the reconciliation when he presents that subject to us from this point of view — to wit, that, by the blotting out of man's sin, the world of good angels and the world of redeemed humanity are to be restored, as a united and indivisible whole, to a right relation to God, in order that they may be able to enjoy his perfect blessedness.

106. Now, this being really the full significance of

the reconciliation, we easily understand why the Bible nowhere speaks of the reconciling of ***God.*** We thus understand, also, why the Bible neither ever says that the world already ***is*** reconciled. It does not say so because the world is not now already in such a relation to God. The Reconciler has been given; in his life and work, in his death, resurrection, and ascension, and in his being clothed with all power in heaven and on earth, ***the conditions*** are given for the reconciliation of the world. And now the message is going out to the world: "Be ye reconciled to God." Not this is the gospel message of reconciliation: "God is now on his part reconciled to you; be ye, also, now reconciled to him." No; neither is it this: "The whole world has once for all been reconciled to God; receive ye now, therefore, this reconciliation, and be ye reconciled to God." No, no; but this is the gospel message of reconciliation: "God is love, and he has sent his only begotten Son to reconcile you to himself; therefore now accept ***him,*** the Son, the Reconciler, and be ye reconciled, that is, allow yourselves to be reconciled, to God." O dear Lord, how simple and how beautiful is not the truth of thy gospel!

107. "Yes, but," — thus some one will again object, — "looking at it in this way, the reconciliation seems to be brought about not by the death of Christ, as the apostle says, but by faith." Answer: This objection rests on a gross misunderstanding. If I inquire after the ***means*** which God has used and is using for the reconciling of man to himself, the answer will be, as the apostle teaches: ***Christ,*** the giving of the only begotten Son into death for sinners. Again, if I ask, ***in what way*** man is [*i. e.*, becomes] reconciled to God, then the answer will be: ***In this way,*** to wit, ***that he accepts Christ.*** Behold here an illustration. If some one has been very sick, but by an efficacious remedy has been healed, then he can say: "By this remedy God has healed me." But if I then ask him, "How did it

happen? ***In what way*** was it done?" he would answer: "Why, ***in this way,*** to wit, ***by my taking in the remedy.''*** When the Israelites had been bitten by the serpents in the wilderness, then God healed them by [or, through] the brazen serpent. Hence, the brazen serpent was ***the means.*** But if I ask, ***"In what way*** were they healed by the brazen serpent?" the answer is: "In this way, to wit, ***they looked upon*** the brazen serpent." Now, the case is really the same here: He who brings about, or effects, the reconciliation is God, the heavenly Father; ***the means*** is the giving of the life of the only begotten Son; ***the manner,*** or ***the way,*** is faith whereby a sinner is united to the Son, the Christ who was delivered up unto death, and through him he is cleansed from sin, led back to God, and united with him. Therefore, in the Bible, never any others are called or said to be "reconciled" than those who have accepted Christ, and have allowed themselves really to be reconciled to God. All others are still unreconciled, but yet they are objects of God's ever continuing work of reconciliation in Christ. For this work aims at the reconciliation of the ***whole world.***

108. But now we go further. In Rom. xi. 15 the apostle uses a very remarkable expression about the reconciliation when he says: ***"If the casting away of them*** [*i. e.*, the Jews] *is* ***a reconciliation of the world, what*** *shall* ***the receiving*** *of them be,* ***but life from the dead?''**** Now, what can this be? Does it not sound strangely that the ***casting away of the Jews*** should be a reconciliation of the world? Well, let us see. The apostle contrasts the ***Jews***

* Literally translated from the Author's (P. W.'s) Swedish rendering in the text. Both the English A. V. and the Rev. V. are nearly like this, only that they both needlessly render the plain noun (*katallage* — the same as in Rom. v. 11, 2 Cor. v. 18, 19) by the participial form "reconciling" instead of "reconciliation." In the Greek this noun is here without the article, the absence of which corresponds, in English, to the indefinite article *a* or *an.* — *J. G. P.*

and the ***world.*** From this circumstance we understand that by "the world" he means ***the Gentile world.*** Then the apostle expresses it as a fact that the casting away of the Jews had now become a reconciliation of the Gentiles. How had that happened? The Saviour shows it in several passages. In the parable of the Great Supper (Luk. xiv.) he teaches that when they who were bidden, that is, the Jews, made excuses and would not come, then they were rejected, and the invitation was sent to the Gentiles instead. In the same manner he speaks in the parable of the Marriage Feast (Mat. xxii.). Precisely the same he sets forth in the parable of the Vineyard (Mat. xxi.). When the householder finally sent his son to the husbandmen to receive his fruits, they took the son, and cast him forth out of the vineyard, and killed him. Then the householder was angry with those husbandmen, destroyed them, and let out the vineyard to others. And this the Lord applies to the Jews, saying: "Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken away from you, and shall be given to a nation [that is, Gentiles] bringing forth the fruits thereof" (verse 43). See also Acts xiii. 46; xxviii. 28. Hence, if we ask what it means that the casting away of the Jews became a reconciliation of the world, we obtain this answer: ***The message of salvation came in this way to the Gentiles so that they learned to know Christ the Saviour, received him as such, and thus were reconciled to God through him.*** "By the fall of the Jews," says the apostle in verse 11 (of Rom. xi.), "salvation *is come* unto the Gentiles." Nothing can be plainer, therefore, than that the apostle, by the word "reconciliation," means that change which consists in a sinner's coming into a right and good relation to God.

109. The same word the apostle uses in Rom. v. 11 where, after having spoken of the reconciliation effected in his own case and in that of his fellow-believers (compare our remarks in §§ 93—98), he says: ***"We also rejoice***

in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.'' * Who, then, — according to the words of the apostle, — who has or who have received the reconciliation? Has God? Nay; ***"we*** have received the reconciliation," he says. And of whom? Of God, for it is in him the apostle rejoices. And through whom? "Through Christ." But who, then, are these "we"? Does that word include the whole word? Nay; the apostle is here speaking not about the world, but about believers and justified persons, as we have seen before (§ 93, *cf.* § 80). He says: "We have ***now*** received the reconciliation." There is emphasis on the word ***"now,"*** — by which the apostle says as much as this: "Formerly we were enemies, but ***now,*** praise be to God, we have received the reconciliation." Behold again an illustration. All Israelites who were bitten by the serpents in the wilderness received the brazen serpent as a healing remedy, but ***health,*** or the healing itself, through that remedy, only such received as looked upon the serpent according to the word of God. Thus also here: The whole world ***has received Christ from God to be its Reconciler,*** but ***the reconciliation*** with God through him only they receive who accept him. But to "receive the reconciliation" is the same as to be

* Revised Version. As observed in the note on pages 5—8, this is the only place in the New Testament where the Authorized Version has the word "atonement," and that, too, as the rendering of a word (*katallage*) which it everywhere else translates by "reconciliation" or "reconciling." If the word "atonement," which so frequently occurs in the Old Testament, meant there and in the New Testament what many theological writters have expressed by such words and phrases as "expiation," "propitiating God," "appeasing the wrath of God," "satisfying the justice of God," "paying man's penalty of sin," etc., etc., then it is passing strange that nowhere in the N. T. — no, not in a single place — is that word "atonement" used (meaning what it is thus supposed to mean), nor any other word or expression having just that supposed meaning. Could not the N. T. writers

reconciled, just as to "receive health" is the same as to be healed.* As long as the sinner rejects Christ he remains, in his enmity, without possession of the reconciliation.

110. In order to understand more clearly still what the apostle means by reconciliation, we may cite also the passage where he uses the same word about mutual relations between human beings. In 1 Cor. vii. 11 the apostle orders that a woman who has parted from her husband remain unmarried or else ***"be reconciled to her husband."*** But now, what does this mean? Nothing else than that she should return to her husband, and enter upon a true marriage relation to him. So much the more must this be the duty of the woman if the husband on his part had used all means to reconcile her to himself. Just think how plain and illustrative this is. Thus through sin we have become alienated from our true God and husband, and now it devolves upon us to become reconciled to him, and to come again into a right and good relation of peace with him; and this we ought to do all the more as he, in his unchangeable love, has done and sacrificed everything, in order to bring about such a reconciliation.

111. Concerning reconciliation between men, also Christ uses the same word in Mat. v. 24 where he says: ***"If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."*** — Now,

say what they meant, or did they not dare to, or was is not necessary? — *J. G. P.*

* When some try to make out something which they call "an objective reconciliation" (or atonement), which is said to consist in this, that *the world*, but *not the individual*, has been reconciled to God, then they try to make out something which is not only unscriptural but also self-contradictory. Why, the world *consists* of individuals. Hence, if I take away or except the individuals, what then is the world which is said to be reconciled? Of course nothing.

what does it mean for any one to be reconciled to his brother? Does it mean to pacify, to appease, or conciliate, his brother? Not at all. Because it may be so that the brother does not need to be appeased, or conciliated; it may be that his mind and loving relation have not at all been disturbed. But still it is necessary for him who has wronged him to go and be reconciled to him. He must then not think this way, and thus answer the Lord: "My brother does not need to be reconciled." No; the Lord did not say: "Go, and reconcile thy brother." But this he said, "Go, and ***be thou*** reconciled to thy brother."* And it still remains for him to be reconciled, even if the brother does not need to be reconciled. On the other hand, it certainly may be that the brother is so bitterly hostile that he cannot at all be appeased, or conciliated. This then would be to the other a constant hinderance to his offering, in case the Saviour had spoken of appeasing the brother or effecting his conciliation. But no. Therefore you need not think this way: "My brother will not be reconciled, and hence I can never go and offer my gift." Nay, not so. Why, the Lord did not say, "Go, and reconcile thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift," but, "Go, ***be thou*** reconciled to thy brother," and that can be done even though thy brother will not be reconciled to thee. What the Saviour means is, therefore, the same here as in other places — just what he says and nothing else: "Thou, who hast wronged thy brother, thou must go to him, confess thy sin and ask his forgiveness, and in this way be reconciled to him, so that ***thou*** mayst come into a right relation to him again. How he then

* In Swedish (as also in German) the verb is reflexive, "reconcile *thyself*," which makes the expression clearer and stronger. The reflexive use of the verb does indeed occur in English, but with a somewhat different sense — that of *to submit, to make content*, etc., as "reconcile yourself to your afflictions or surroundings." But here the meaning is rather: to be kindly affectioned, to be friendly disposed, etc. — *J. G. P*

feels toward thee, that is not thy business; that is his own affair before God. If he be still hostilely disposed, it will not be any hinderance to thy offering thy gift on the altar. Nay, on the contrary it is then he who will be met by this command: 'Do not come with thy offerings before the altar, because thou standest in a wrong relation to thy brother. Go thy way, and first be reconciled to thy brother. Until this is done, God will not receive any gift from thy hands'." Consequently, from this passage we gain a new confirmation of what the Bible means by reconciliation, and then, again, by this we understand what it is to be reconciled to God.

112. "Well, yes; but" — thus at last some will say — "is not this to take the very heart out of the gospel? If the world is not reconciled, what then shall I believe, what then have I to live on, and die by?" — We know it: many honest and well-meaning souls will thus question. But to all such questionings we answer: "To let stand what God in his word says, and to abide by it, that is not to take away the gospel nor any part of it. ***That which is written,*** that is the right and true doctrine, which will suffice and hold both to live on, and to die by. Yea, it is vastly more safe to live and die by what God says than by what he does not say. Only dare boldly to commit yourself to his word. But his word does not give you a ***reconciliation*** to believe in, but it gives you a ***Reconciler,*** a living person, the Son of God, in whom you can believe, upon whom you can rely with full confidence of heart, and to whom you can wholly surrender yourself. Believe therefore ***in him,*** and then you are reconciled to God, and can live happy and die blessed. Not this, ***"the world is reconciled,"*** but this, ***"Jesus is mine,"*** shall be your faith's joyous claim of salvation in life, and your heart's sweet rest when, somewhere and sometime, you drop down ready to breathe forth your last sighs on earth.

CHAPTER VII.

"Be ye Reconciled to God," or, The Ministry and Motives of Reconciliation.

113. ***"We are ambassadors therefore on behalf of Christ, as though God were intreating by us: we beseech you on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God"*** (2 Cor. v. 20*). In the preceding verses the apostle had set forth

* Revised Version, which is here (as indeed also in most other places) more nearly like the Author's (P. W.'s) Swedish rendering in the text. The R. V. unwarrantably puts the pronoun *"you"* in one place, — the A. V. has it twice in the verse. But the apostle is speaking in general terms, not to Christians, who as such of course had already become reconciled. By the R. V. the Greek preposition *"huper"* (literally, *over, for*) is in both places where it occurs in the verse translated *"on behalf of,"* which is a great improvement over the inconsistent renderings in the A. V., which has first *"for* Christ," and then *"in* Christ's *stead."* But, as commentators generally agree to say, "an ambassador speaks *on behalf of,* not instead of, the court which accredits him." As will be seen in the next paragraph (§ 114), P. W. translates *"huper"* by *"for the sake of"* ("for Christ's sake"), which harmonizes best with its meaning throughout the New Testament, especially here in this chapter (2 Cor. v.), which by many has been supposed to teach substitution pure and simple. The last clause of verse 15, however, upsets that theory completely; for there the connection of the words (in Greek) is such that it cannot, by any manner or means, be construed so as to mean any thing else than that Christ *rose again* as well as died *for* us, that is, for our sakes, not in our stead. What an absurd doctrine it would be to teach that he arose *instead* of men, saints and sinners, the unborn as well as the dead, so that they would never need to arise from the state of death! But there the apostle puts the death and the resurrection of Christ in exactly an equal relation to man. The Greek clause would in English literally run thus: "unto the for (*huper*) them having died and arisen," *i. e.*, unto the one who for them died and arose. There are two participles immediately connected by an "and" (*kai*) and preceded by the definite article common to both; and

that it was God who dwelt and worked in Christ, and that his work in Christ aimed at the reconciliation of the whole world to himself. Every man's reconciliation to God is therefore a work of God himself through Christ (verse 18). After the apostle himself had been reconciled, he had from the same God received "the word of reconciliation" (verse 19). And now he was an ambassador of God for the sake of Christ. An ambassador has nothing else to do than to deliver the words of his sender to him whom they concern. His business is not to think out something of his own, but simply with faithfulness to set forth the words of the sender. Nor is it his business to defend or explain the words of the sender, but only correctly to present them. Now, such was the position of the apostles in their relation to God. They were not to think out anything of their own, any new doctrine, or theology, to give to the people; but they were only to deliver to all peoples, both to Jews and to Gentiles, plainly and artlessly the word of ***God*** — not to explain or maintain it, but only to proclaim it. It is this that gives their preaching such an extraordinary weight. Had they spoken out of their own notions we could say to them: "Who are you, that we should hear you?" But now they can answer: "It is not we, who speak, but it is God." It was God who through his Spirit gave them all that they should speak. Therefore Paul could say to the Christians at Thessalonica: "When ye received from us the word of the message, *even the word* of God, ye accepted *it* not *as* the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God, which also worketh in you that believe." (1Thess. ii. 13. English Revised Version).

between that mutual article and the participles is placed the phrase "*for them*" (*huper auton*), which could not be placed anywhere else, in order unmistakably to mark it as belonging to both the participles alike. If any other meaning had been intended, the apostle certainly could, would and must have used a different construction. — *J. G. P.*

114. But the apostle's saying, "We are ambassadors ***for the sake of Christ,"*** that was not saying merely as much as, "in Christ's stead," but it is saying vastly more. Imagine a king sending an ambassador to a foreign court to procure for his son a bride. Then that ambassador can say that he is the king's ambassador for the sake of the king's son, for his errand pertains to a matter of great importance to the king's son. When the aged Abraham sent his faithful servant Eliezer to his native country, in order to procure a wife for Isaac (Gen. xxiv.), then Eliezer was ***Abraham's ambassador for the sake of Isaac.*** Lo, similar is the case also here. The apostle was the ambassador of God for the sake of Christ: his embassy concerned Christ, the cause of Christ, the kingdom of Christ, the glory of Christ, the presenting of a bride to Christ (2 Cor. xi. 2). When the apostle preached the gospel he did not merely look upon the misery of men in their sins, or upon their need of salvation, but still more —- in the very first place — ***upon the cause of Christ.*** The real motive power in his missionary activity was not so much this thought, ***"It is demanded for the salvation of lost men, which is the chief matter concerned,"*** but rather this thought, ***"It is demanded for the glory of the name of Christ, which is chiefly concerned,*** — to wit, that ***he*** may be honored, that ***his*** kingdom may be extended until all things, according to the promise of God, shall be put in subjection under his feet." (*Cf.* 1 Cor. xv. 24—28; Heb. ii. 8). The first of these motive thoughts is, indeed, good; it can also mightily excite the feelings, and thus spur on the believer to activity. But it cannot give him the true steadfastness and perseverance, nor the true power of victory. If, on the contrary, his heart is filled with this great thought, that his work concerns the glorification of the name of ***Christ*** and the extension of his dominion, then this will give him the right kind of power and persistence to devote himself to the work, and to sacrifice all, yea, to go through

fire and water. if need be, in order to lay all men at his, Jesus', feet.

115. In a similar strain the apostle expresses himself in Rom. i. 5 where he says that through Christ he had ***"received grace and apostleship, unto obedience of faith among all the nations, for his name's sake,"*** that is, for the purpose of glorifying his name.* Here we see again the great principal object on which his eyes were fixed first and last, to wit: ***to glorify the name of Jesus by subduing the nations*** (Gentiles, heathen) ***to him in the obedience of faith.*** Most certainly the Gentiles' own salvation was an important matter also to the heart of the apostle; but ***the highest aim*** it was not. That highest aim was the glorification of Christ, as we have just said. This way of regarding the work of missions is now somewhat uncommon. But of this we will have occasion to speak some other time. Meanwhile we understand from this what it means that the apostle was God's ambassador "for the sake of Christ."

116. ***"As God is intreating by us,"*** the apostle adds (2 Cor. v. 20). Again he affirms that it was not he himself, but God, who was entreating. Since God has sacrificed his only begotten Son, in order to reconcile the world to himself,

* Thus it is seen that the Author (P. W.) takes the apostle's expression, "for his name's sake" — literally, "for his name" (*"huper," over,* or, *for*) — in connection with the nearer phrase, "unto obedience of faith," not in connection with the remoter clause, "through whom we received grace and apostleship," as the punctuation both in the R. V. and in the A. V. would indicate the meaning to be. That the apostle does not mean to say that he and others had received grace and apostleship *"for his* (Christ's) *name's sake"* — whatever such a phrase might mean — is plain from his introductory phrase, "through whom"; for what sense would there be in saying, in connection with the very same phrase and idea, first, "through whom," and then soon after, "for his name's sake"? Taken in direct connection with "obedience of faith," the phrase, "for his name's sake," is full of grand and glorious meaning. — *J. G. P.*

he now by his ambassadors entreats, that is, invites, prays, exhorts, the world to allow itself to be reconciled to him, and not to continue in its enmity. And yet he has not become weary, but age after age he is, through the gospel, reaching out his entreating hands to sinners. Oh, what a God! Can this be the God of whom we, by nature, are so afraid? — afraid of him, as if he would do us some evil? Yes, just he is the one. God entreats, prays, — mark and hear again: God is begging and entreating you, "Be reconciled to me." Have you the hardihood to resist?

117. During the last war between Russia and Turkey all institutions of charity in Russia were ordered, without remuneration, to receive and care for wounded soldiers. Against this order the superintendent of a very large institution protested, on a certain occasion, on the ground that the officially approved regulations of the institution forbade his complying with the order. When the emperor had received information of this circumstance he himself visited the institution. The superintendent, as commanded, showed him all the rooms; but when the emperor told him he wished him to receive wounded soldiers he answered humbly, but decidedly, that it was impossible. ***"But if I, in a very nice manner, pray you to do so?"*** said the emperor. That word touched the heart of the superintendent; he began to shed tears, and declared that, whatever might happen, he could not resist his emperor's prayer. This may serve us for a comparison. Perhaps you have never yet from your heart prayed to God, but ***he*** stoops to ***you*** and condescends to pray and entreat you. Just think: God ***prays,*** entreats, implores you to open your heart and receive him, in order that he may make you happy. Can you resist that entreaty? Have you the hardiness to do so? That heart most be of stone which can say "No" to such a prayer.

118. ***"We beseech for Christ's sake."*** Thus also the apostle prays, because he is of one mind with God. He

does not threaten and storm, but he prays and beseeches.* And whom does he beseech? He beseeches the world, the entire ungodly mass of humanity that is still lying dead in trespasses and sins, that it might become willing to be reconciled to God. He beseeches ***you*** — you who still are living without God in the world. He beseeches on behalf of God, for it is God who has given him the commission, the embassy. And he beseeches ***for Christ's sake.*** He repeats here the expression, "for Christ's sake," or "for the sake of Christ." Not merely for your own sake, but for Christ's sake, he beseeches you. As if he would say: "It is not only your own salvation that is concerned, but also the fulfillment of those promises which the Father has given to his only begotten Son, that he shall have the nations for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession" (Ps. ii. 8). Nothing can be more effectively moving than this. Just think how everything is accumulating to the point of penetrating and stirring up the depths of your heart: — the glory of Christ is concerned, — your own salvation is concerned, — God entreats and Paul beseeches, "Be reconciled." — And you — what are you doing? Have you still the hardihood and power to say, "No"? Is there not something stirring in

* The Versions have, indeed, two different words to correspond to the different ones in the Greek original (*parakaleo*, used about God, and *deomai*, predicate of the "we" in the text). But the word to correspond to *parakaleo* should not be "beseech," as the A. V. has it, and then the weaker "*pray*" to correspond to the much stronger Greek *deomai*, which primarily means, "I am in need," then "I pray, beseech, implore," etc. The apostle's choice of words is highly and beautifully appropriate: the first (*parakaleo*) meaning literally, "I call near to myself," then "I call upon, invite, exhort, persuade, beg, entreat," implying "great urgency, usually enforced by adducing reasons or arguments;" the second (*deomai*), used only about man's praying, should then have a corresponding stronger and humbler word like beseech, implore, supplicate. — *J. G. P.*

your heart that inclines you to say, "Yes"? Do you dare to suppress it?

119. This concern on the part of God to have sinners reconciled to himself appears everywhere in the Bible. In Isaiah LXV. 1 he says: ***"I am inquired of by them that ask not for me; I am found of them that seek me not; unto a nation that hath not called upon my name I said: Lo, I am here! Lo, I am here!"**** If the Lord, to some one who had cried after him, had given the answer, "Lo, I am here!" why, already that would have been a great favor; because if he were to deal with us according to our deserts, he would never notice us at all, nor care for our cry. But now in his mercy he not only goes so far as to listen to our cries, — nay, that does not satisfy him, for he says: ***"Before*** they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear" (Is. LXV. 24). But he does not let the matter stop even at this point, — his graciousness goes still further. To such as do not even call upon him he says: "Lo, I am here! Lo, I am here!" It is just as if he would say: "Perhaps you do not know that I am present, seeing that you say nothing. But I am here. If you want anything, let me know it. Because I have no pleasure in your death, but in your salvation." Can you imagine anything kinder than this? And this of the great and righteous God, of whom the whole world thinks in its heart that he is secretly evil-disposed toward it. When Paul in his epistle to the Romans cites these words of the prophet he says: "Isaiah ***is very bold,*** and saith, 'I was found of them that sought me not'" (Rom x. 20). As if he would say: ***"It***

* I quote the words with the meaning given in the Revised Version; but as the verbs, "am inquired of" and "am found," are put in the present tense, I let "ask" and "seek" have the same tense, as is the case in the Hebrew. The construction of the last clause, and the exclamation, "*Lo, I am here,*" I give according to the Swedish rendering by the Author (P. W.), who generally follows the Swedish New Proof-Translation. — *J. G. P.*

was very bold on the part of Isaiah to place himself, by his preaching, so squarely against all men's natural thoughts about God; but yet he did venture to take the bold step." Yea, how could he have dared to have avoided it? Was he not — he, Isaiah, too — an ambassador of God? Well, then, it was his duty to announce the word of his Lord honestly and correctly.

120. But here it might stop. Is not this enough? Oh, no! However great this seems to be, the Lord is still greater. One is ready to ask: In what, then, can that be possible? Why, just listen. In direct connection with the previously quoted words (in Is. LXV.) the Lord continues: ***"I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way*** *that is* ***not good, after their own thoughts; a people that provoketh me to my face continually."*** (Revised Version). — Now, listen to that: Not only to care for such as did not call upon his name, because, perchance, they did not know anything of him, nor had thought of him, — not only to care for such did he condescend; nay, that was not all; but he condescended to care even for those who were "a disobedient and gainsaying people" (Rom. x. 21), implying that they knew of him and had heard his voice, but spoke against him and provoked him "before his face," that is, by serving idols (having other gods before his face, as the expression is in Ex. xx. 3, literally). Unto such he did spread out his hands, and that not only once or twice; nay, ***all the day*** he continued to spread them forth, in order to receive in his arms the erring ones who, perhaps, yet in the eleventh hour would consider, return, and be reconciled to him. What do you think of such grace? Can you still hard-heartedly bear this thought, this picture, of your God — of him who has created you, of him who has sacrificed his only begotten Son for you — standing with his hands spread out all the day to you, entreating you to let him save you? Can you know this, and still feel safe in sin?

121. Let us relate a story, a true narrative of real events. There was a Swedish workman who lived without God. On the estate where he was working, many of his comrades became converted, and this circumstance troubled him. At last he could not endure it, but left his position and moved away. But in the new place where he obtained employment, it was "no better." There also he met Christians who "troubled" him. Then finally he decided to leave that place, too, and go to America. He started. When he landed in the new world, there was a countryman of his, who met him, and asked him whence he came and whither he intended to go. He told him. But then the other man said: "It was not so much that I meant; my question was rather concerning your soul, whether you have ever thought about whence by sin you have fallen, and where at last you will land." This was too much for our man; he saw that it was God seeking him, and with overflowing emotions he cried out: "Lord God, is it then impossible to avoid coming in contact with thee, since thou art even here meeting me and art stretching out thy hands after me?" This was a stubborn man, a gainsaying man, but the Lord pursued him and attacked him by his grace, so that he finally was obliged to surrender. What do you say of such a God? If he now entreats you also, will you still be determined to remain in sin and in the world? Will you still not allow his grace to overwhelm you?

122. The prophet Joel (in chap. ii. 12 and 13), after having proclaimed the drawing nigh of a punitive judgement of the Lord, sets forth the following words of the Lord:* ***"Yet even now, saith the LORD, turn ye unto me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: and rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and full of***

* All the following quotations of Old Testament passages are from the Revised Version. — *J. G. P.*

compassion, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy, and repenteth him of the evil" [changes his threats of punishments, on the conditions before named]. And in Isaiah xlv 21 and 22 the Lord says: *"There is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else."* In Ezekiel xxxiii. 11 we read: *"As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?"* Ah, dear soul! why should you want to die when the Lord wants you to live? Now, now is an acceptable time, now is the day of salvation; make use of the opportunity, for another day is coming when it will be too late. Every step you take brings you nearer eternity. You are just now, perhaps, taking the last steps; *"yet even now,"* says the Lord, "turn unto me, for I am gracious, full of compassion, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy." Have you lived without God forty, fifty, eighty years or more, — *"yet even now"* hearken to his voice, and turn to him. His invitation is not limited to any particular age. No one is too young, and no one is too old. Neither is his invitation limited to any certain class. No one is too high, no one too low, no one too little a sinner, no one too great a sinner. Whoever you may be — *in the eyes of God you are too precious* to die and perish. Therefore, turn and be reconciled to God, and you will be saved. Thus God entreats and implores, and he wants an answer — an answer to-day, an answer from you. O say, what answer will you give him? Have you the heart to answer, "No"?

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